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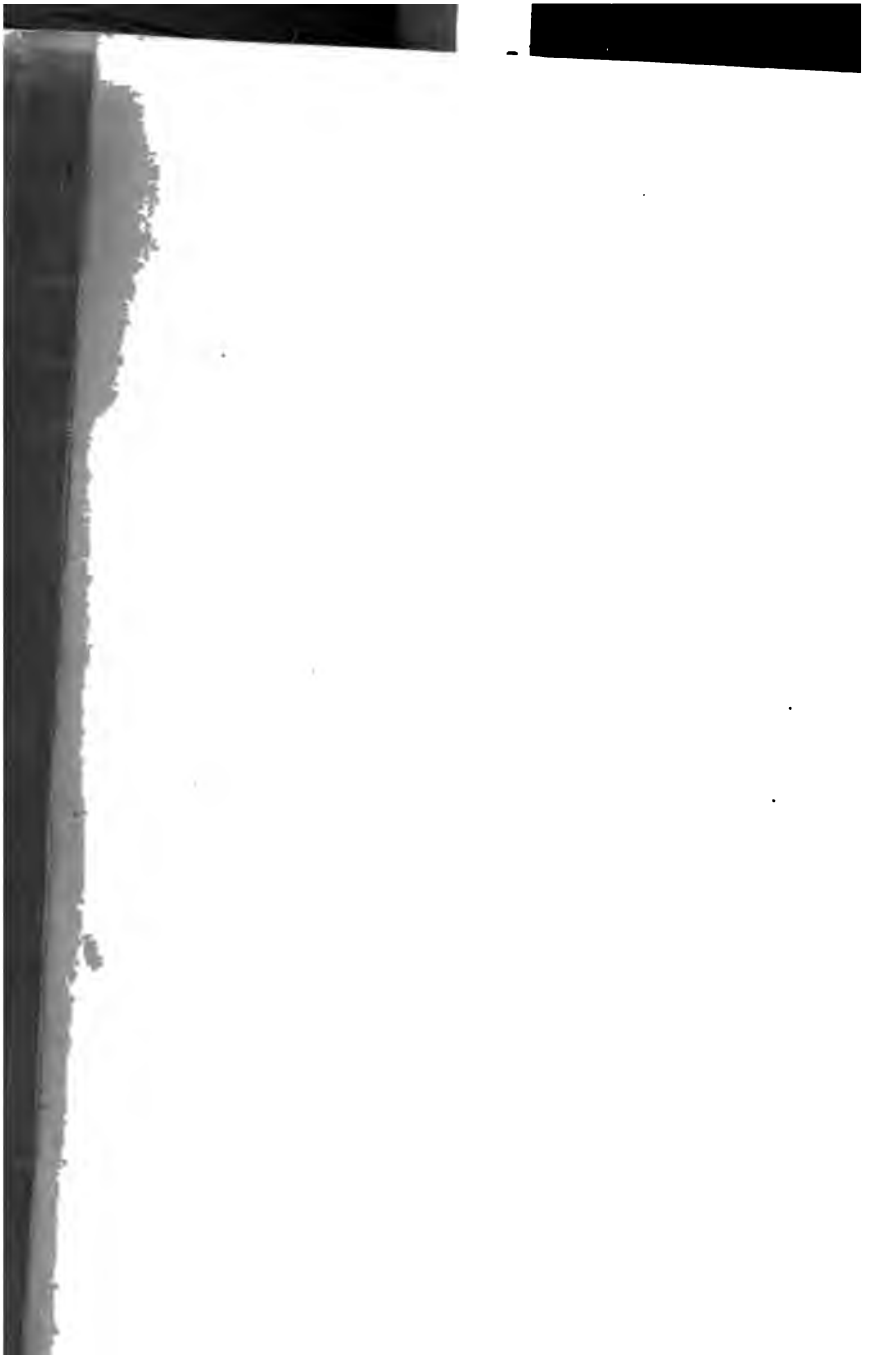
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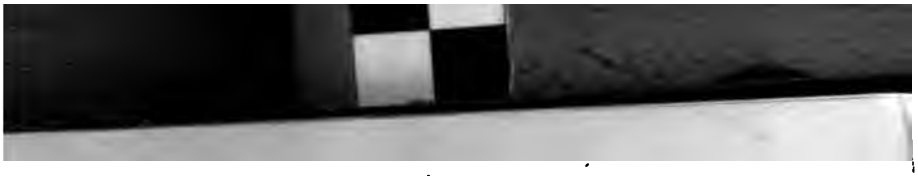
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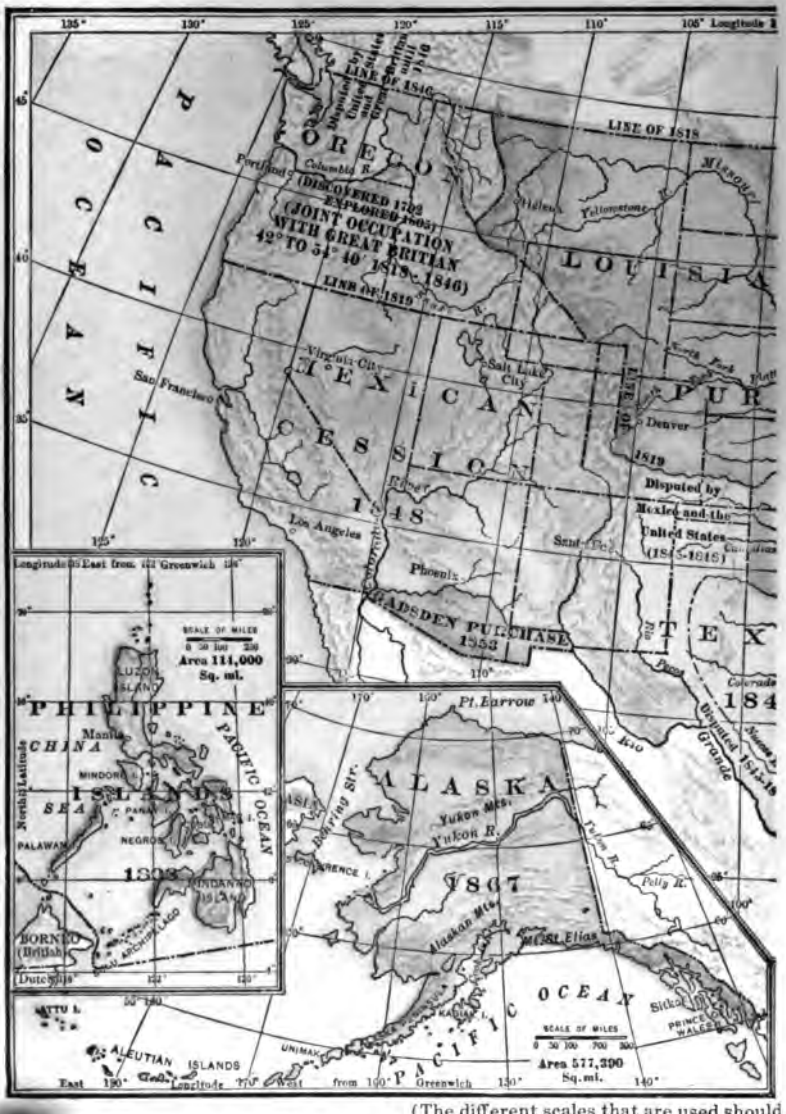


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A History of the Pacific Northwest

BY

JOSEPH SCHAFER, Ph.D.

Head of the Department of History, University of Oregon; Sometime Fellow in History, University of Wisconsin; Joint Author of Strong and Schafer's "Government of the American People"; Author of "The Origin of the System of Land Grants in Aid of Education," "The Pacific Slope and Alaska," etc.

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PREFACE TO THE REVISED EDITION

The new material accumulated during the past twelve years since the original publication of the History of the Pacific Northwest has rendered necessary not a mere revision of that work but on many essential points a complete rewriting of it. This is notably true of the chapters dealing with the history of the Oregon boundary negotiation between the United States and Great Britain. It is true also of parts of the balance of the early part of the work. Moreover, since the movement in this comparatively new region is very rapid and a single decade sometimes revolutionizes conditions, it was felt to be necessary to add special chapters on the Progress of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, and Social and Political Change. With this additional matter it would seem as if the story of the Pacific Northwest were in this book brought down to the actual present.

The author is under great obligations to the management of the Record Office at London, England, for permission to use files of papers relating to the Oregon Question; to the late Ambassador Whitelaw Reid for his courtesy in securing for him access to all available materials in London; and to Lord Stanmore for permission to examine and use papers of

Lord Aberdeen. He is also under obligations to the Carnegie Institution of Washington, D. C., for assistance in unearthing important manuscripts contained in the archives at Washington.

JOSEPH SCHAFER.

University of Oregon,
Eugene, Oregon, October 23, 1917.

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A HISTORY OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

CHAPTER I

EARLY EXPLORERS OF THE PACIFIC COAST

Balboa discovers the Pacific. It is a far cry from the Isthmus of Panama to the capes above Bering's Strait; and the explorations which unveiled that long coast line form a thrilling chapter in the history of our continent. The story opens on the twenty-fifth of September, 1513, when Balboa, surrounded by sixty Spanish companions, stood on a peak of the Darien Mountains and gazed with the rapture of a discoverer on the waters of the South Sea. It closes, practically, two hundred and sixty-five years later when Captain Cook rounded the " western extremity of all America," in latitude 65° and 46′, calling the point of land Cape Prince of Wales.

Claims its coasts for Spain. Balboa, at the moment of his discovery, proclaimed that the coasts and islands pertaining to the South Sea belonged to Spain. Four days later he reached the shore at the Gulf of San Miguel and, thereupon, took possession in a more formal manner, among other things, marching into the surf at the head of his party.

The search for a "strait." Such dramatic formalities rarely have much effect upon the course of history, yet the discovery itself was a great triumph for the Spanish government. Since the time of Columbus, their navigators had been searching among the West Indies, and along the Atlantic Coast of South and Central America, in the blind hope of finding an open passage to the Orient. They failed because, as it was supposed, Nature had sown islands so thickly in this part of the ocean that it was very difficult, or impossible, for ships to pick their way among them. The numerous failures had discouraged many. But when Balboa reached the sea by marching overland a few miles from the Darien coast no one any longer doubted that a convenient westward route existed, if it could only be found. Generally, it was assumed that the passage would be found north of the Isthmus. Magellan soon afterward proved that there was a way around South America, but it was very difficult, and far out of the direct course from Europe to Eastern Asia. The necessity still remained, therefore, to find "the strait," and the discovery of the Pacific, with other contemporaneous events, stimulated the search in an extraordinary manner.

During the sixteenth century the nation most interested in the discovery of the strait joining the two great oceans was Spain. Portugal had been her great rival in the effort to find an all-water route to the Indies, and while Columbus was making heroic but fruitless efforts to break through the ocean barriers to

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the west, Vasco da Gama had opened a way for his countrymen around Africa. This route the Portuguese monopolized, and they were amassing wealth from the profits of the spice trade with the Moluccas. In order to share in that most lucrative branch of commerce, it was absolutely necessary for Spain to complete her hopeful western waterway by the discovery of the indispensable strait. Now that a footing had been secured on the Pacific, it was determined to follow up the search from that side as well as from the Atlantic.

First suggestion of an Isthmian canal. The first ships to sail upon the Pacific were launched by Balboa himself in the year 1517. They were built on the Panama coast, some of the timbers for their construction being carried across the mountains on the backs of Indian slaves. Aside from building the vessels, however, Balboa achieved very little. He coasted along the shore for some distance, gathered gold and pearls from the natives, and returned to Darien to meet death at the hands of political enemies. About six years later two other Spaniards explored northwestward from Panama as far as the Gulf of Fonseca, discovering Lake Nicaragua. This lake, it was hoped, with the stream flowing from it to the Atlantic, and a very short canal through the level ground on the west, might afford a practicable passage from ocean to ocean. Thus early (1525) was suggested the idea of the interoceanic canal.

Spain by this time was in possession of the rich val-

ley of Mexico, where Cortez had recently overthrown the power of the Aztec confederacy. It was the most important territory of the New World yet brought under subjection by Europeans. The land was rich, its resources were varied, and the position it occupied between the two seas was a commanding one.

Mexico becomes the Spanish base in North America. It was natural that the colony planted in Mexico should become the center of new explorations. Cortez, ever on the lookout for opportunities of further conquest, sent his military expeditions toward the west and soon learned of a great ocean, which he rightly judged to be the same as Balboa's South Sea. The news of this discovery made a deep impression upon his imagination. Military successes had already brought him riches and a fame which reached to all countries of the civilized world. But Cortez saw clearly in the proximity of the great ocean an opportunity both to secure greater wealth and a more enduring renown. By exploring the Pacific he expected to find many islands abounding in gold and other riches. He hoped also to reach the Moluccas, and above all, he was anxious to find the strait so ardently desired by the king of Spain.

Establishing a naval station on the west coast of Mexico, Cortez soon began sending expeditions toward the north. Some of his ships were lost, and large sums of money were expended, but no very important results were obtained until 1539.[1]

[1] The southern end of the California peninsula was discovered

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Explorations undertaken by Cortez. In that year Cortez sent out Ulloa with three ships to trace the Mexican coast northward. One of the three vessels was soon lost, but with the other two the mariner held his course until he approached the head of the Gulf of California. Tacking about he now passed along the shore of the peninsula to the cape which forms its southern extremity, which he rounded and sailed along the outer coast as far as Cedros Island, in latitude 28°. From this expedition Ulloa and his flagship never returned, although the surviving vessel reached Mexico in the following year. Cortez returned to Spain in 1540, and died there seven years later.

Alarçon's voyage. The romantic story of Coronado, familiar to all readers of American history, connects in an interesting manner with the exploration of the Pacific. At the time of Coronado's expedition, 1540, Mendoza, a rival of Cortez, was viceroy of Mexico. In order to increase the chance of Coronado's success Mendoza sent a fleet under Alarçon to support the land expedition. Alarçon reached the head of the Gulf as Ulloa had done before him, and, leaving his ships at the entrance of Colorado River, ascended the stream in small boats as far as its junction with the Gila. This proved that the land stretching toward the southwest was a peninsula, and not an island. The name *California,* now known to have been derived from a Sixteenth Century Spanish novel, was first applied to

in 1534. It was supposed to be an island. The attempt to plant a colony there failed.

the country about this time. In its original use it signified a fabulous island, situated "not far from the terrestrial paradise," and inhabited by a gigantic race of women.

Voyage of Cabrillo and Ferelo. In 1542 Mendoza sent out Cabrillo and Ferelo to explore the coast northward along the peninsula. The result of Cabrillo's voyage was the discovery of the excellent harbour which he named *San Miguel* but which was later called San Diego, and the partial exploration of the California coast line above San Diego possibly to the forty-second parallel. An outline map of the west coast of America from Panama to Oregon will thus summarize fairly the Spanish explorations during the thirty years following Balboa's discovery of the Pacific.

Drake's voyage. The story of Sir Francis Drake's incursion into the Pacific, his capture of Spanish treasure ships, his landing in California and subsequent circumnavigation of the globe is full of dramatic interest. But, despite oft repeated claims that he made new discoveries to the northward of 42°, there is no convincing evidence to prove that he did so. It is not probable that he saw any part of the Oregon coast, although he may have sailed the high sea as far to the north as the forty-third parallel.

Its influence upon Spain. Nevertheless, by showing them how insecure were their western coasts and how unprotected their rich trade between the Philippine Islands and Mexico Drake's voyage incited the Spaniards to undertake explorations having a de-

fensive object. The plan was to explore minutely the coast of Upper California, and establish forts at two good harbours which were to be refitting stations for the ships from Manila when they arrived after the terrible buffetings of the long voyage across the Pacific. Sebastian Vizcaino made the necessary explorations in 1602–3, mapping carefully the California harbours of Monterey and San Diego.

Vizcaino's voyages. The activity of Vizcaino, which was not followed up by the fortification of the California harbours, as he advised, marks the end of Spanish exploring activity on the coast for more than a century and a half. The Manila ships, as the vessels trading to the Philippines were called, were almost the only Spanish craft to approach the coast of Upper California during that long interval, while the tribes and peoples seen by Cabrillo, Drake and Vizcaino remained during the same period in their earlier condition of unrelieved barbarism.

Decline of Spain. Spain, meantime, entered upon that remarkable era of relative decline, beginning with the destruction of her Great Armada in 1588, which gave opportunity to England, France, and Holland to participate in the colonization of America as competitors of Spain. England, on account of her naval development, was enabled to outstrip all of her rivals and finally, at the conclusion of the French war in 1763, to gain the whole eastern half of North America, all of which had once been claimed by Spain under the name of Florida.

Anson's voyage. These changes seriously affected the position of Spain on the west side of the continent. Indeed, her power there had already been challenged, for in 1740–44 Commodore George Anson was sent by the British Admiralty to attack Spain in the Pacific, especially along the coasts of South America and in the Philippines. Through great misfortunes at sea, the program of offensive warfare could be carried out only partially. Yet, Anson stormed Payta, a town on the Peruvian coast, and captured it; he cruised off the Mexican coast in search of the Manila galleon, which went into hiding and escaped him. He afterward captured one of the galleons in the Philippines, taking a prize valued at $1,500,000. The voyage was completed by sailing to China and around the Cape of Good Hope to England. It was believed that had the squadron rounded Cape Horn at the proper season, thus avoiding undue losses, it could easily have captured Baldivia in Chili, terrified that kingdom and "awed the most distant parts of the Spanish Empire in America." [1]

Arthur Dobbs prophesies British expansion in the Pacific. About the time of Anson's return from the Pacific, Mr. Arthur Dobbs, a public spirited English gentleman, issued a book [2] in which he pointed to the Pacific as the most promising field of British explor-

[1] Richard Walter—"Anson's Voyage," p. 280.

[2] On Hudson's Bay, London, 1744. See summary in the author's Acquisition of Oregon, pt. I—Discovery & Exploration. Bulletin University of Oregon. N. S. Vol. VI, No. 3, December, 1908.

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ing and exploiting effort for many years to come. Great Britain, he argued, should take away the monopoly of the Hudson Bay Company[1] because that company had refused to carry out its charter agreement to search for a northwest passage into the Pacific. The government should seek that passage, and having found it should establish naval stations in the North Pacific, say near California, and in the South Pacific, say at the Isle of Easter. From these stations as centres, explorations should be made throughout the great ocean, north and south. He believed there were thousands of islands, perhaps continents, still to be found there and these were doubtless peopled with tribes waiting to be supplied with British goods.

The Northwest Passage. Under Dobbs's stimulation a good deal was done, within the next few years, to find the Northwest passage, but without success. However, the government began at the close of the French war (1764) to send exploring expeditions into the Pacific and in the ten years following many new islands were brought to light by a succession of navigators — Byron, Wallis, Carteret, and especially Cook, the greatest discoverer of all.

Bering's Russian Exploration. These notable activities of the British were matched by similar activities of the Russians. In 1728 Vitus Bering, a Dane who set out some years before in the service of Peter the Great, sailed north from Kamchatka and settled

[1] The Hudson's Bay Company received its charter from King Charles II in 1669.

the age old question as to whether Asia and North America were joined together in the north. In 1741 Bering and Tchirikoff discovered Alaska and a number of the islands of Bering Sea. Thereafter the Russians began the trade in furs which soon carried them from Kamchatka to the Alaska coast and thence southward toward California and Mexico.

It was these two movements of the British and Russians, which roused the Spaniards of Mexico to undertake new schemes of conquest, settlement, and exploration for the sake of safeguarding their possessions if possible against the fate which had befallen Florida.

Spaniards forced to become expansionists and explorers. Their plan was, first: to plant colonies and build forts at San Diego and Monterey harbours, as Vizcaino had recommended in 1603. Second, the entire region of Upper California was to be brought under Spanish rule. Third, they were to undertake explorations by sea, to the vicinity of the Russian settlements in order to fix the Spanish claim more firmly upon the northwest coast of America. In connection with the plan of conquest it was decided to establish a number of missions, similar to those already existing in the Peninsula, for the purpose of Christianizing the Indians. Father Junipero Serra, a devout Franciscan friar, was in charge of the missionary branch of the movement.

California missions planted. The first of the series of missions was founded by Father Serra at San

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Diego July 16, 1769, and a fort or presidio was built near it. Thus the process of the missionary and military occupation was begun. Monterey was occupied the next year and that place became the capital of Upper California. Other missions and presidios were founded from time to time.

Explorations of Perez, 1774. The first exploring ship, the *Santiago,* sailed from Monterey under Juan Perez June 11, 1774. Perez had instructions to sail to the sixtieth parallel before making his landfall. But running short of water, he put about to the east on July 15th and on the 20th reached the coast near the present southern limits of Alaska. He named the place Santa Margarita. Perez now decided to abandon the attempt to reach a higher latitude, and turned to explore the land southward to California. Dropping down some six degrees, he ran into a " C " shaped harbour which he named *San Lorenzo,* a roadstead which later became famous under the name of *Nootka Sound.* Many points on the Oregon and California coasts were seen by Perez on his voyage southward, which terminated at Monterey August 27.

Heceta's discovery. Perez had made a general exploration of the entire northwest coast from the parallel of 42° to 54° 40′, but he had failed to reach the region visited by the Russians. In the following year a new expedition was fitted out under the command of Captain Bruno Heceta. Heceta had instructions requiring him to reach latitude 65°. At a point near Fuca's Strait, the present Point Grenville, he landed and per-

formed the ceremony of taking possession. Soon afterward Heceta decided to turn back, but one of his two ships, the *Sonora,* under the command of Bodega e Cuadra, held her course northward until she attained the latitude 58°. Cuadra landed at a point on the Alaska coast opposite Mt. Edgecumbe, which he named San Jacinto, and there performed the ceremony of taking possession.

On his southern voyage Heceta saw the bay at the mouth of the Columbia, but while recognizing the signs of a great river, he failed to enter it.

Origin of Cook's third voyage. We have now reached an important turning point in the history of the Northwest Coast. The British, through the earlier explorations already mentioned, had developed an extraordinary interest in the Pacific. Cook had explored Australia and New Zealand, great land masses occupied by numerous aboriginal tribes; numerous smaller islands had been found especially in the South Pacific, so the dream of Arthur Dobbs was beginning to take on some of the features of reality.

Great Britain had not found a northern passage into the Pacific. But it was now known, since Samuel Hearne's journey to the mouth of Coppermine River in 1769–1772, that there was open sea far above the latitude of Hudson's Strait and far to the northwest of Hudson's Bay. The suggestion was that by sailing much farther north than formerly a channel might be found. And since Bering's Strait probably connected the Pacific with the northern sea in the west,

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the chance of finding the passage would be doubled by searching from both oceans simultaneously.

Captain Cook was commissioned to make the attempt from the west. His instructions were issued July 6 and he sailed on July 12, 1776.

Cook's instructions. After making certain researches in the South Pacific, his orders were to run to the coast of "New Albion"[1] in about latitude 45°, thence to proceed northward to 65°, and endeavour to find a way from Bering's Strait into the Atlantic.

Cook discovers the Sandwich Islands. After spending eighteen months in southern waters, Cook sailed northward and in January, 1778, discovered a group of islands on which he bestowed the name of his patron, the Earl of Sandwich.

Two months later he came in sight of the Oregon coast in about latitude 44°. He first ran a couple of degrees southward and then up the coast to about 47° where he began a careful search for a strait which maritime tradition declared had once been found in that latitude by a Greek pilot named Juan de Fuca. Cook convinced himself that the story of Juan de Fuca's voyage from the Pacific to the Atlantic was a myth, like so many other sailors' tales.

Limits of Cook's discoveries. About latitude 49° Cook entered the harbour named San Lorenzo by Perez — Nootka Sound. There the Indians crowded about

[1] A part of the coast of California was named New Albion by Drake. But it was erroneously held in England that he had explored under that designation a long stretch of coast line.

the vessel, bringing furs to barter with the sailors. Steering northwest, Cook saw San Jacinto Mountain, so named by Cuadra, which he rechristened Mt. Edgecumbe. In latitude 60° he saw a lofty peak which he named Mt. St. Elias. Cook held his course westward and northward, exploring the Alaska coast and inlets. Finally, sailing through Bering's Strait, on the 9th day of August, 1778, he reached the "western extremity of all America" in latitude 65° 46′. Directly opposite he found the easternmost point of Asia. The first he named *Cape Prince of Wales,* the second *East Cape.*

Finding the season too far advanced for the projected search for a passage to the Atlantic, Cook turned back to winter in the Sandwich Islands, where he lost his life in February, 1779.

Their historical significance. Cook was not the discoverer of the Northwest coast. But, while he came after the Spanish navigators in time and while he left much for others to do, he yet made the first extended scientific surveys in that region and in effect gave to the world its first definite information concerning the contour of western North America from the latitude of California to Cape Prince of Wales.

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CHAPTER II

DISCOVERY OF PUGET SOUND AND COLUMBIA RIVER

Cook's men discover the world's best fur market. The voyage of Captain Cook had one result which neither he nor his government had foreseen. At several points along the northwest coast and the Alaska coast, particularly at Nootka Sound and at Cook's Inlet, the natives crowded around the ships to exchange sea-otter skins and other furs for such baubles as the sailors cared to part with. The white men wanted the skins for clothing and bedding, to make their voyage more comfortable, no one suspecting that their value was more than nominal. But when the exploring squadron touched at Canton, on the south coast of China, merchants came on board to bargain for these furs. The prices offered went up day by day until at last the men were selling the remains of their otter-skin garments and a few unused furs for sums that seemed almost fabulous. "Skins which did not cost the purchaser sixpence sterling," writes one of the men, "sold for one hundred dollars." The excitement on shipboard was intense. The crew wished to return at once, secure a cargo of furs on the northwest coast, and make their fortunes. When the officers refused, they

begged, blustered, and even threatened mutiny, but of course in vain.

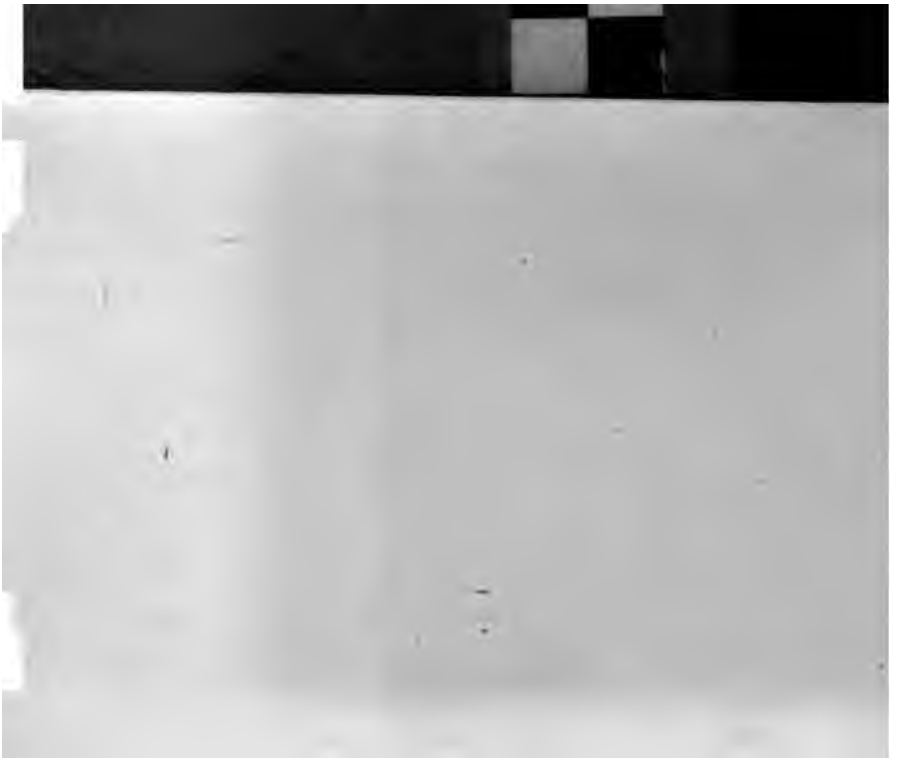
Beginnings of the Northwest Coast fur trade. The discovery of the value of otter skins in the Canton market instantly changed the thought of the world with respect to the northwest coast. The region abounded in furs, but thus far it had not been visited for commercial purposes. Spain had sent her navigators along those coasts to confirm her ancient claim of sovereignty over them, Great Britain because she hoped to find, half hidden behind some jagged cape, the long sought passage to the eastern sea. A powerful new motive now became operative. In a few years ships flying the colours of England, of France, of Portugal and of the new Republic of the United States began regularly to visit those waters, their crews prospecting madly among the coves and inlets wherever the presence of Indian tribes gave promise of a profitable trade.

So far as is now known, the first definite plan for carrying on this northwest fur trade was projected by Captain King who, in the published report of Cook's voyage, recommended that the East India Company should begin the trade, combining exploration with it.[1] While this plan was not carried out, a private company under Richard Cadman Etches prepared in 1785 to undertake "a regular and reciprocal system of commerce between Great Britain, the Northwest Coast of America, the Japanese, Kureil, and Jesso Islands, and the coasts of Asia, Corea and China." This company,

[1] Cook's Voyage, II, 437-440.



The Sea Otter



[redacted]

which seems to have received the government's blessing, with no financial help, sent forward the same year two well equipped vessels, named the *King George* and the *Queen Charlotte,* under command respectively of Nathaniel Portlock and George Dixon, both of whom were naval officers on leave.[1]

Discoveries of Dixon, Barclay, Meares, Duffin. The *King George* and *Queen Charlotte* were not the first vessels to sail for the northwest coast in response to the new commercial stimulus.[2] But we are interested in the way the fur trade influenced exploration and we know from the journal of Captain Dixon that important results aside from commercial gains flowed from the voyage of the *Queen Charlotte* in the years 1786 to 1787. Dixon, in sailing south from Alaska, discovered that the land lying just below fifty-four degrees was an island and he named it Queen Charlotte's Island. He explored nearly its entire circuit and named several points on what he supposed was the mainland to the east, among them Cape Pitt, Cape Chatham, and Cape Dalrymple which outlined Dixon's Strait.

Other traders from Macao in China and from Ostend were on the coast during the years 1786 to 1788 and their commanders, Captain John Meares and Captain

[1] An Authentic Statement, etc., of facts relating to Nootka Sound. By *Argonaut* (Richard Cadman Etches) London, 1790.

[2] James Hanna, an Englishman from the coast of China is supposed to have reached the northwest coast in 1785. He had a small vessel and flew the Portuguese flag, doubtless to elude the British East India Co. He secured a profitable cargo.

Barclay especially, while on profits bent as their main issue, incidentally made discoveries of considerable value. Barclay, sailing from Nootka in July, 1787, discovered a passage between Cape Flattery and the land he had just left, which we know as Vancouver Island but supposed at that time to be the mainland. The next year Meares ordered his lieutenant Robert Duffin to explore that passage which now was traced for the distance of several leagues. The passage lay only one degree north of the fabled strait of Juan de Fuca and while, unlike that creation of a sailor's fancy, it did not in fact connect the two great oceans, no one knew what it might lead into and its discovery revived the most active geographical speculation.

Men began to see that Cook's voyage after all left many things unsettled. The great navigator had located Cape Flattery and Nootka Sound, after which he had sailed to the Alaska coast without so much as suspecting that he had been running past a succession of great islands instead of along the continental coastline. That fact was now becoming clear, and the new found strait suggested a sea of indefinite extent in that latitude, eating into the continent.

The Nootka Sound Controversy. The new geographical problems raised by the work of the maritime fur traders, in themselves would have justified a new British exploring expedition under government auspices. Another circumstance tending to the same result was the now celebrated Nootka Sound Controversy of 1789–1790. This arose over the attempt of Spain,

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in 1789, to fortify Nootka Sound and exclude all foreigners from that region, of which as we saw she claimed the exclusive sovereignty. Harsh treatment of British traders and the forcible seizure by Don Martinez, the Spanish commander, of several British owned vessels at Nootka precipitated the quarrel which at one time seemed to foreshadow war. Finally, the two nations reached an agreement called the Nootka Convention which records a complete triumph for Britain. In it Spain conceded the right of British subjects to trade and make settlements upon any part of the coast not already occupied. In other words, Spain gave up her exclusive claim so far as the coast above California was concerned.[1]

For carrying out the terms of the Nootka Convention it was necessary for both nations to send navigators to the Northwest Coast and Great Britain sent on that service Captain George Vancouver, who was destined to become pre-eminent as the geographer of the Northwest Coast.

Vancouver's Voyage. Vancouver spent portions of three summers in those waters and he gave to the world a great map of the west coast of North America from San Diego in California to Cook's River, or Cook's Inlet, in Alaska. He explored the inland sea into which De Fuca's Strait was found to lead and named it Puget's Sound for his friend Lieutenant Puget; he circumnavigated Vancouver Island; he ex-

[1] See Manning, William Ray. The Nootka Sound Controversy. Rept. of Am. Hist. Assn, 1904 p. 279-478.

plored the numerous inlets which penetrate the continent between Fuca's Strait and Alaska. While a portion of the work in Puget Sound waters had been done before Vancouver arrived by the Spanish explorers Quimper, Eliza, Galieno and Valdez, and while the great Spanish explorer Cuadra was so closely associated with himself that he called the island north of Fuca's Strait *Vancouver and Cuadra's Island,* yet to Vancouver is due the credit for combining into one system the results of many separate explorations and for giving the world an intelligible view of northwest coast geography as a whole.

Vancouver had been instructed by the Admiralty to secure accurate information concerning any waterway that might help to connect the northwest coast, for commercial purposes, with Canada, and the admiralty suggested to him that such a waterway might perhaps be found by entering Fuca's Strait and the sea into which it must lead. They say: "The discovery of a near communication between any such sea or strait, and any river running into or from the Lake of the Woods would be particularly useful." [1] This supposed river, flowing into the western sea near Nootka Sound, from the Lake of the Woods, or thereabouts, was an idea which the government had derived from the Montreal fur traders who as early as 1784–5 were anxious to explore to the Pacific and who sent in memorials fortified by fanciful maps based upon their own conjectures or upon the equally indefinite guesses of the Indians,

[1] Instructions in Vancouver's Voyage, Ed. of 1801, 1-40-41.

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near and remote.[1] Therefore, in a sense, Vancouver's instructions represent a transition from the earlier idea of finding a strait through which ships might sail from Pacific to Atlantic, to the later idea of finding a practicable line of communication, such as a river or rivers, across the continent.

The Columbia River. On Vancouver's map one such possibility is indicated in the delineation of a great river which enters the Pacific just above the 46th parallel and which was traced for the distance of about one hundred miles inland. The name it bears is Columbia River. This is the first time it has appeared on a map of the coast. It was not, however, a discovery of the British geographer, but of a plain Yankee skipper and it is to be credited to the maritime fur trade just as are the discoveries of Fuca's Strait and Queen Charlotte's Island.

John Ledyard. The American interest in the Northwest Coast trade possibly sprang also from the reports of Cook's voyage. John Ledyard of Hartford, Connecticut, was a corporal on Cook's flagship. In 1783 Ledyard returned to the United States and promptly published a small volume giving an account of Cook's voyage. He had been so deeply impressed with the chance for gain in a fur trade between the Northwest Coast and Canton that he laboured inces-

[1] Such a map was executed by Peter Pond, agent of the Northwest Company, or as it then was the Frobisher Brothers of Montreal, and sent to the government in 1785. Brymner, Canadian Archives, Report for 1890.

santly to interest Boston, New York and Philadelphia merchants to fit out a ship, of which Ledyard was to be supercargo, for the purpose of inaugurating that trade. He failed, and went to France, where he pursued the same idea, again without success.[1]

A Boston company organized for the N. W. and China trade. Whether the tradition of Ledyard's appeal was bearing fruit among the merchants of Boston, whether they became interested in reports of English ships outfitting for the Northwest trade, or whether they were moved by the reading of "Cook's Voyage," we do not know.[2] But in 1787 a company headed by Joseph Barrell was formed for carrying on a trade to the Northwest Coast, from there to Canton and thence back to Boston. The ships *Columbia* and *Lady Washington,* under John Kendrick and Robert Gray sailed from Boston harbour October 1 of that year, rounded Cape Horn and appeared the next autumn on the Northwest Coast. They wintered at Nootka, and in 1789, having completed a cargo, Gray in the *Columbia* sailed for China and on the 9th of August, 1790, arrived at Boston after circumnavigating the globe.

Captain Gray discovers the Columbia River. The successful opening of the trade excited great interest in the New England capital.[3] The *Columbia*

[1] For Ledyard's relations Jefferson at Paris, see page 35 below.

[2] Bulfinch's *Oregon & El Dorado,* published in 1866, in which we are told that Cook's voyage was "the topic of the day" in Boston in 1787 cannot be accepted as proof on the point.

[3] See newspaper notices as reprinted in the author's Acquisition of Oregon, p. 21-22.

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was sent back at once and it was on this second voyage that Captain Gray made his famous discovery. He had wintered on the coast and in the spring was working southward, turning his prow into every strange inlet in the hope of finding fresh villages of natives to exploit for furs.[1] On the 7th of May he ran into a harbour in latitude 46° 58′ which he called Bulfinch Harbour but to which Vancouver later gave the more appropriate name of Gray's Harbour. Four days later he ran in between the breakers into what at first he supposed to be another harbour. He says, however, "When we were over the bar we found this to be a large river of fresh water, up which we steered." Gray traded with the Indians along the lower Columbia, and before leaving the river, which he did on May 20, he bestowed upon it the name of his good ship.[2]

Vancouver explores the Columbia. Vancouver learned from Gray about the new discovery, and in October he sent Lieutenant Broughton into the river with the ship *Chatham*. Broughton ascended to the first rapids, about one hundred miles from the bar, whereas Gray had sailed up only some thirty miles.

[1] The traders found that the largest profits came from the trade with Indians who had never before seen white men. The Americans in one case secured furs valued at several hundred dollars for an old chisel! Hence profitable trade was dependent on new explorations.

[2] Gray also named the north and south headlands at the mouth of the river, calling the first Cape Hancock, the second Cape Adams. Meares, in 1788, had named the North Cape Disappointment which name it retains.

Vancouver's map represents Broughton's survey but retains Gray's name for the river.

Vancouver's map was published in 1798. Three years later appeared Mackenzie's map of the western parts of North America, which was constructed by combining with Vancouver's map certain features which Mackenzie himself had discovered, or supposed he had discovered. The result, so far as the Columbia is concerned, is very striking.

Rivalry of the Northwest and Hudson Bay Companies. Alexander Mackenzie was a partner of the Northwest Company, the Montreal concern which as early as 1784–5 projected an exploring expedition having the Pacific Ocean as its objective. This company was a bitter rival of the old chartered Hudson Bay Company, and it was seeking ways of hedging that company about. Arthur Dobbs, in 1744, complained of the Hudson Bay Company's want of exploring or even trading enterprise; that they merely allowed certain tribes of the natives to come down the rivers to their forts to trade but did not deign to go among them or send agents to develop commerce with tribes not yet reached. Later, however, the company became more active and the great journey of Samuel Hearne to Coppermine River, 1769–72, had added enormously to their trading field in the far Northwest.

Exploration of Mackenzie River, 1789. But the Northwest Company had an establishment called Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca, which was favourably located with reference to explorations either to the

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north or to the west. In 1789 Mackenzie set out from Fort Chipewyan with a small party in canoes and, circling Great Slave Lake, discovered a river flowing out of that lake toward the north. He descended the river to the Arctic Ocean, making the entire journey in forty days. Returning, he immediately organized the trade along the line thus opened. Since he had found the estuary of Mackenzie River choked with ice in July, and since he observed in the west a chain of mountains running still farther north, Mackenzie became convinced of the impracticability of a northwest passage around the continent. He therefore came to believe in the extreme desirability of finding a way through or across the continent to the Pacific, an idea we saw the British admiralty suggesting in its instructions to Captain Vancouver about the same time.

Accordingly, Mackenzie proposed to reach the Pacific by ascending Peace River which flows into Lake Athabasca from the west, and from its sources to cross to some west-flowing stream. Wintering near the Rocky Mountains on Peace River in 1792–3, he resumed his journey May 9, 1793, and on the 18th of June discovered a river having a westerly course. This he descended for twenty-five days when the difficulties of navigation impelled him to leave the river. By following an old trail and afterward descending another smaller stream with a more direct course, he and his party of ten intrepid woodsmen reached the Pacific in latitude 52° 20′ at a place which had been recently surveyed by Vancouver and by him called Cascade Canal.

Here on the smooth, protected surface of an overhanging cliff, the trader-explorer left a memorial of his achievement in the legend: "Alexander Mackenzie from Canada by land, the twenty-second of July, one thousand seven hundred and ninety three."

The river down which Mackenzie floated so many days was called by the Indians Tacoutchee Tesse. It must, he argued, flow into the Pacific, and since it trended strongly southward he concluded that it was identical with the river shown on Vancouver's map under the name Columbia. This identification Mackenzie indicated on his map by a dotted line which relates the lower Columbia to the Tacoutchee Tesse.

In fact, Mackenzie had been on Fraser River, which flows into Puget Sound, and not on the upper Columbia at all. But his mistake gave rise to most interesting speculations about the practicability of connecting the fur trade of the Columbia with that of Canada and Hudson Bay. Mackenzie's "Voyages," published in 1801, presents his trading plan in detail.

Mackenzie's plan for consolidating the British North American fur trade. Mackenzie proposed that the Hudson Bay Company and Northwest Company should unite in a single organization to control the fur trade of North America from the parallel of 45° to the pole. The line of communication from the Rocky Mountains by way of Lake Winnipeg and Nelson River to Hudson Bay was so much shorter than the line which ran to Montreal that Hudson Bay at the mouth of Nelson River should be regarded as the proper place

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for the trade emporium on the Atlantic side. "But," says Mackenzie, "whatever course may be taken from the Atlantic, the Columbia is the line of communication from the Pacific Ocean, pointed out by nature, as it is the only navigable river in the whole extent of Vancouver's minute survey of that coast; its banks also form the first level country in all the southern extent of continental coast from Cook's entry [Inlet] and, consequently, the most northern situation fit for colonization, and suitable for the residence of a civilized people." The line of posts would begin at the mouth of Columbia River, and in the Rocky Mountains it would connect with the head of Saskatchewan River, which it would follow to Lake Winnipeg and Nelson River. Related to this continental trade would be "the fishing in both seas and the markets of the four quarters of the globe." [1]

Mackenzie appeared to anticipate little difficulty in carrying out his plan of using the Columbia, assuming that it would be a simple matter for Great Britain to acquire title to the territory through which it flowed. He remarked that the boundary between British and American possessions in the Northwest must be rectified [2] by drawing a line from the Lake of the Woods

[1] Mackenzie's *Voyage*, p. 411. It should be pointed out that, although Mackenzie was mistaken in supposing he had been on the Columbia, his inferences from that supposition were perfectly sound, for it was the Columbia, not the Fraser, which interlocked with the Saskatchewan.

[2] The boundary line described in the treaty of 1783 was an impossible line. It assumed that a line drawn due west from the

to some point on the Mississippi. But since, under the treaty of 1783, Great Britain had a right to navigate the river, that line must come down to a point where it becomes navigable. And wherever that might be, probably at the parallel of 45°, it must be continued west, till it terminates in the Pacific Ocean, to the south of the Columbia.

northwestern point of the Lake of the Woods would strike the Mississippi, but the source of that river proved to be too far south.

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CHAPTER III

ORIGIN OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION

What was known about the Northwest Coast in the year 1801. Mackenzie's error in supposing the Columbia to be identical with the river he descended, for some days, in 1793 shows how tardily correct geographical knowledge concerning the Pacific Northwest was being accumulated. The coast line, indeed, had now been pretty accurately ascertained. The estuaries of the rivers were laid down on the map of Vancouver. The possibility of reaching the coast overland, from Fort Chipewyan, had been demonstrated by Mackenzie, who also hazarded a happy guess as to the relation between the upper Columbia and the river systems connecting with Hudson Bay. But when Mackenzie published his "Voyages," in 1801, nothing definite was yet known about the relation between the Columbia, flowing into the Pacific near the 46th parallel, and the Missouri or other rivers rising in the Rocky Mountains and flowing southward toward the Gulf of Mexico. Traditions, or vague surmises, such as Jonathan Carver published in 1778, about a "River of the West," or "Oregon," whatever their source, cannot be taken for actual geographical knowledge.

How the Columbia might be traced; David

Thompson's story of a trip to the Columbia in 1801? There were two lines along which such exact information would probably be sought. The Canadians, following Mackenzie's suggestion, might work their way across the Rockies from the head waters of the Saskatchewan, in which case they would reach one of the great branches of the Columbia and readily descend it to the sea. On the other hand, the young American nation, prompted by its interest in the Mississippi system, might seek the Columbia by way of the Missouri connection. Both lines of communication were bound to be utilized in time and circumstances would determine which should have the precedence. There is some reason to believe that an attempt was made by the Northwest Company of Canada in or about the year 1801, to carry out Mackenzie's plan to connect the Canadian trade with a Columbia River trade. David Thompson, who was for many years geographer of the company, stated in 1845 that he led a party across the Rockies to the head waters of McGillivray's River, a branch of the Columbia, but was driven back by the Indians. Thus the project, if it was really undertaken, ended in failure.[1]

From this time forward the major interest in the overland route to the Pacific shifts to the United

[1] In David Thompson's Memorial to the British Government. In Pub. Record Office, London. F. O. America, 440. Information has reached me which indicates that Thompson's MS journals fail to support this claim. One of the McGillivrays in 1801 approached the divide near the sources of the Saskatchewan. Letter of T. C. Elliott, dated Jan. 7, 1916.

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States. And as in Canada one man, Mackenzie, had been the pivot about which far west explorations turned, so in this country the central influence moulding policies and determining results was likewise a unique individual, Thomas Jefferson.

Sources of Jefferson's interest in the west. Jefferson's interest in the west had two sources, environment and philosophy. We know that his Piedmont home was practically at the frontier of Virginia where his father, Peter Jefferson, established himself as a pioneer about the year 1737. Probably this fact helps to explain the heartiness of Jefferson's sympathy with all things western. But, on the other hand, Jefferson was perhaps the most perfect American representative of the type of eighteenth century philosopher. He was passionately fond of knowledge and he had a strong bent for investigation. This caused him to look into questions of every sort, and problems in geography or in natural history appealed to him powerfully. The fact that a great portion of the American continent was as yet unexplored insured Jefferson's special interest in that region. He was restlessly anxious to learn all those facts about it that were still unknown. But as he saw "the works of nature in the large," to use his own phrase, the great features of its geography, like its mountains and water courses, were to him of paramount interest.

The Missouri and its connections as Jefferson saw them in 1781–2. In the years 1781 and 1782 Jefferson wrote a greographical and political work entitled

"Notes on Virginia." In this book he shows considerable knowledge of those portions of the trans-Allegheny region which had been previously explored. He discusses the plants and animals native to those regions, the lead and coal deposits, and calls especial attention to certain extraordinary deposits near the Ohio River of the bones of huge, extinct animals.[1] Our chief interest, however, is to learn what Jefferson at that time knew about those features of western geography which condition the discovery of an overland route to the Pacific, especially the river systems.

Jefferson justifies a special treatment of far western rivers, although they are not within the boundaries of Virginia, on the ground that they open to the people of Virginia "channels of extensive communication with the Western and Northwestern country." . . . His description of the Missouri is most interesting. "The Missouri [he says] is in fact the principal river, contributing more to the common stream than does the Mississippi, even after its junction with the Illinois. It is remarkably cold, muddy, and rapid. Its overflowings are considerable. They happen in the months of June and July. Their commencement being so much later than those of the Mississippi, would induce a belief that the sources of the Missouri are northward of those of the Mississippi, unless we suppose that the cold increases again with the ascent of the land from the Mississippi westwardly. That the ascent is great, is

[1] We know from Jefferson's letters how earnestly he tried to procure specimens of the "big bones" found near the Ohio.

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proved by the rapidity of the river. Six miles above its mouth it is brought within a compass of half a mile's width; yet the Spanish merchants at Pancore, or St. Louis, say they go two thousand miles up it. . . . What is the shortest distance between the navigable waters of the Missouri and those of the North River [Rio del Norte or Rio Grande], or how far this is navigable above Santa Fé, I could never learn."

At another place in the book Jefferson records the following incident: "A Mr. Stanley, taken prisoner near the mouth of the Tanissee, relates that, after being transferred through several tribes, from one to another, he was at length carried over the mountains west of the Missouri *to a river which runs westwardly.*" [1]

These writings show that Jefferson knew something about the northwestward reach of the Missouri and that he had a vague notion about a connection between that river and the south flowing Rio Grande, as also between the Missouri and a west flowing stream. But the "river which runs westwardly" had for him as yet neither name, character, nor exact destination.

His letter to Steptoe. His manner of writing about these things, however, indicates Jefferson's eagerness to learn all that could be learned about them, and in letters written near the same time we have proof that his mind was turning to methodical exploration as a means of clearing up such geographical problems. On the 26th of November, 1782, he wrote to James

[1] Quotations from Jefferson's writings, Ford's Ed., as reprinted in the author's Acquisition of Oregon Territory, pp. 29-30.

Steptoe to thank him for his proposed attempt to procure for Jefferson some of the "Big Bones" from the Ohio. In this letter he takes occasion to suggest: "Any information of your own on the subject of the big bones or their history or on anything else in the western country will come acceptably to me. . . . Descriptions of animals, vegetables, minerals, or other curious things, notes on the Indians' information of the country between the Mississippi and waters of the South Sea, etc., etc. will strike your mind as worthy being communicated." [1]

Letter to George Rogers Clark. It was a full year later, December 4, 1783, that Jefferson wrote the now well known letter to George Rogers Clark suggesting an exploration from the Mississippi to forestall a prospective British exploration to California and asking the resourceful Kentucky soldier how he would like to lead such a party.[2]

[1] I follow the Congress edition in the above. Ford has it, III, p. 63: "Notes on the Indians, information of the country between the Mississippi and waters of the South Sea," making a comma out of an apostrophe, unless the Congress edition has reversed that process.

[2] "I find," he says, writing from Annapolis, where Congress was then sitting, "they have subscribed a very large sum of money in England for exploring the country from the Mississippi to California; they pretend it is only to promote knowledge. I am afraid they have thoughts of colonizing in that quarter. Some of us have been talking here in a feeble way of making the attempt to search that country. But I doubt if we have enough of that kind of spirit to raise the money. How would you like to lead such a party, though I am afraid the prospect is not worth asking the question." Am. Hist. Rev. III, 675.

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We do not know what route would have been followed if this suggested expedition had been carried out. But since Jefferson in his "Notes" shows a very clear knowledge of the route to Santa Fé, with the distance from New Orleans, it was possibly his idea that California should be entered from the south. Still, we are free to assume that his interest in the "river that runs westwardly" might have determined that the expedition should ascend the Missouri, in the hope of reaching California along the course of some unknown *River of the West,* such as Carver represented as entering the Pacific below the forty-fifth parallel.

Jefferson and Ledyard; their plan of exploration failed. However that may be, it is certain that thereafter Jefferson gave his attention consistently to the problem of finding a connection from the Missouri to the Pacific, or the reverse. In 1786 he collaborated with John Ledyard, who had been a corporal on Cook's flagship, a project for exploring from the Pacific eastward to the Missouri and thence to the United States. Ledyard was then in Paris, where he tried unsuccessfully to secure support for his commercial scheme which included a fur trade on the Northwest Coast, and a trade in Chinese goods at Canton. Jefferson believed him well qualified for exploring ventures, although recognizing that he had "too much imagination." He requested the Russian government to grant Ledyard permission to cross Siberia. Ledyard was to go to Kamtschatka, cross from there in some Russian

vessel to Nootka Sound, and penetrate eastward to the Missouri.[1] Ledyard, however, got no farther than Siberia, when he was turned back by officials of the Russian government.[2]

The Michaux project; Jefferson's instructions to Michaux. Jefferson's paternal relation to the American Philosophical Society afforded an opportunity, in 1793, to promote another attempt to discover the overland route to the Pacific. André Michaux, a famous French botanist, who was already somewhat familiar with parts of western America, sought the encouragement of that society and was offered financial aid upon condition that he "explore the country along the Missouri, and thence westwardly to the Pacific Ocean." In his instructions to Michaux Jefferson wrote.[3] "As a channel of communication between these states and the Pacific Ocean the Missouri, so far as it extends, presents itself under circumstances of unquestioned preference. It has therefore been declared as a fundamental object of the subscription (not to be dispensed with) that this river shall be considered and explored as a part of the communication sought for. . . . You

[1] This plan seems impossible except on the theory that Jefferson and Ledyard believed in a west flowing river which interlocked with the Missouri, as did Carver's River of the West, or Oregon.

[2] Jefferson, in 1821, stated that the Empress of Russia refused permission to Ledyard, deeming the plan entirely chimerical, but that he undertook to cross Siberia without official sanction and thus subjected himself to arrest and forcible return.

[3] Writings, Federal Edition, VII, 208-209.

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will then pursue such of the largest streams of that river as shall lead by the shortest way and the lowest latitudes to the Pacific Ocean. . . . It would seem by the latest maps as if a river called Oregon, interlocked with the Missouri for a considerable distance, and entered the Pacific Ocean not far southward of Nootka Sound. But the society are aware that these maps are not to be trusted so far as to be the ground of positive instruction to you. They therefore only mention the fact, leaving to yourself to verify it, or to follow such other as you shall find to be the real truth."

It would seem, from these instructions, as if Jefferson's knowledge of western rivers, relating to the Missouri was in 1793 no more complete, or very little more complete, than it was in 1781–2.[1]

Failure again. Michaux's energies were dissipated in political activities, directed by the French minister, Genet, and the exploring plan failed of execution, like that of Ledyard six years earlier.

When Jefferson returned to the project, ten years

[1] The instructions to Michaux were written in January, 1793. Capt. Robert Gray, who discovered the mouth of the Columbia River in May, 1792, returned to Boston in July, 1793. But there is no evidence that Jefferson learned of Gray's discovery otherwise than through Vancouver's Voyage published in 1798. Thwaites's statement, Original Journals of Lewis and Clark, I XXI. "Jefferson hoped that this stream [discovered by Gray] would be found to interlock with the Missouri" is based on the supposition that Jefferson possessed in 1793 knowledge which he could not have had at that time. Jefferson knew nothing about the Columbia, and the "Oregon" mentioned by him probably refers to Carver.

later, conditions were much more favourable. There was now available a fund of geographical information which did not exist in 1793, and there were political incentives to exploration which reinforced the scientific motive. And, better than all, Jefferson as President was in a position to secure the practical execution of his design.

The Vancouver and Mackenzie maps. The most important additions to the geography of the west were those contained in Vancouver's map (1798), which laid down the lower Columbia, and in Mackenzie's map (1801) which described an actual northern route across the continent, although erroneously relating Columbia river to that route. Mackenzie also made more definite many things pertaining to the river systems east of the Rocky Mountains, and north of the forty-fifth parallel. Also, the nature of the mountain barrier between the eastflowing and the westflowing rivers could be measurably realized from Mackenzie's description of the pass he followed.[1]

The political incentives which contributed to induce Jefferson to promote westward exploration in 1803–6 might almost be considered sufficient in themselves to bring about the result.

Napoleon alarms the Americans. When Jefferson

[1] There is evidence in the map Lewis executed at Fort Mandan in the winter of 1803-4 that he had with him Mackenzie's map. Both Vancouver's book and Mackenzie's are referred to by Gallatin in his correspondence with Jefferson on the subject of the instructions to Lewis in 1803. Probably the explorers carried copies of both.

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entered upon his office of President, March 4, 1801, the Mississippi was still the western boundary of the United States. All west of the river was supposed by Americans to belong to Spain, which had been in possession at New Orleans since 1763. As a matter of fact, however, Napoleon had recently forced Spain to give back Louisiana to France, but without publishing to the world the treaty of October, 1800, by which this was accomplished. When the Americans learned, a little later, of the change of ownership of this western territory, and the prospect that France would succeed Spain at the mouth of the Mississippi, great alarm was felt throughout the country. "Perhaps nothing since the Revolutionary War," wrote Jefferson, "has produced more uneasy sensations throughout the body of the nation."

The western settlements. A glance at the condition of the West of that time will explain why this was so. The entire region beyond the Alleghenies was by nature tributary to the Mississippi. It was a fertile land, containing rich valleys, beautiful plains, and far-stretching forests which once teemed with wild game. Daniel Boone called Kentucky "a second Paradise." He and other pioneers at first entered the region as hunters. Afterward they cut a road through the Shenandoah Valley and Cumberland Gap ("the Wilderness Road"), through which they brought their wagons, families, and cattle, to make new homes upon the western waters. The pioneers of Tennessee arrived at about the same time, just before the Revolu-

tionary War, and occupied the high valleys along the head waters of Tennessee River. From these beginnings settlement had spread rapidly in spite of Indian wars and frontier hardships, until, in the year 1800, Kentucky had a white population of 180,000, and Tennessee 92,000. By that time Ohio had also been settled, partly by Revolutionary soldiers from New England, and already counted 45,000 people. A few settlers were scattered along the rivers of Alabama and Mississippi, and still others lived in the old dilapidated French villages of Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. We will not be far wrong in placing the total white population on Mississippi waters in 1800 at 325,000.

Conditions of life in the West. The prosperity of all these people was absolutely in the hands of the power that controlled the Mississippi. At that time there were no canals joining the eastern and western streams; railroads had never been heard of; and the steamboat, afterward such a wonderful aid in transporting goods and passengers up the rivers of the West, was yet to be invented. Manufactured goods, articles of little bulk and considerable value, were carried across the mountains from the Atlantic seaboard by pack train or wagon, to supply the frugal wants of the frontier settlers. Cattle from the great ranges of Kentucky and Tennessee were driven eastward to market; but all the other produce of farm, mill, and factory, the surplus wheat, corn, pork, flour, and lumber, were carried to the one invariable market at New Orleans.

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Dependence on the Mississippi. So long as Americans had the free use of the Mississippi, all was satisfactory. In theory this was one of our unquestioned rights; but the practical fact was different, for the Spaniards owned the land on both banks of the river at its mouth, and our people were dependent on them for a place to deposit the produce brought down until it could be transferred to ocean vessels. If they, or the French who were about to step into their places, should refuse to continue this right of deposit, or should charge a heavy toll for it, they could sap the very life-blood of the American communities in the entire trans-Allegheny region.

Spaniards close the Mississippi. The Spaniards were supposed to be too weak to attempt this with any promise of success; but France had become the dread of Europe, and ranked as the greatest military power of the world. It is not strange that Americans should take alarm at the prospect of having her as a neighbour on the west, especially since this would mean French garrisons planted about New Orleans. The uneasiness of which Jefferson wrote was caused by the fear that France, when once in possession, might undertake to oppress the Americans in order to establish her influence over the western people. Just before the close of the year 1802 the news reached Washington that a Spanish official at New Orleans had actually denied to Americans the right of deposit, which was guaranteed by treaty. This action not only increased the alarm already widely felt, but aroused the West

to a desire for war in which many eastern people shared.

Jefferson's plan to buy New Orleans and West Florida. Jefferson was by nature strongly averse to war, and would sometimes yield a great deal in order to preserve peace. In this case, however, his mind seems to have been made up. We must go to war rather than permit France to take and keep possession of the mouth of the Mississippi. But it would be best, he thought, to delay the armed conflict as long as possible, and meantime he would try to gain the control of the river for the United States by the arts of diplomacy, in the use of which he was a master hand. The plan was to frighten Napoleon with a threat that the United States would join Great Britain in a war against France, and thus induce him, as a condition of peace, to sell us the island and city of New Orleans, together with West Florida. This would give the United States both banks of the Mississippi at its mouth, and insure the control of the river. Jefferson had already instructed Robert R. Livingston, our minister to France, to undertake this purchase of territory from Napoleon; and when the war spirit ran high in Congress, during the winter of 1802–1803, he sent James Monroe to Paris as a special commissioner to assist in carrying out this plan. At the same time Congress took measures to place the country in as good condition as possible to bear the shock of a future war.

The special message of January 18, 1803. It was under these circumstances, when the country was ex-

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cited over affairs in the West, and fearful of a collision with the overshadowing power of France; when the fate of the Mississippi appeared to be hanging in the balance, and might turn either way; that President Jefferson sent to Congress the now famous message of January 18, 1803, recommending an exploring expedition to the Pacific.

Its two divisions. The first part. This document contains two distinct parts, which ought, however, to be read together. The first part deals with questions which apparently relate wholly to Indian affairs. But the reader of the message can readily see that the President's chief purpose was to provide additional protection to the Mississippi River. He felt strongly that our interests would not be safe till the United States had a large population in the West, and especially along the great river itself. The government must encourage the westward movement in every proper way, and thus "plant upon the Mississippi itself the means of its own safety." But especially must an effort be made to establish American settlements on the great stretches of unoccupied land immediately along the east bank. Since the Indian tribes owned most of this land, something must be done to induce them to part with it; and Jefferson believed that the best method was to continue selling them goods, including ploughs and other implements which had a tendency to make of the Indians as agricultural people. With the expansion of their corn fields, the growth of their herds and flocks, they would see the uselessness of retaining

vast stretches of forest for hunting grounds, and would be glad to sell these to the government for money or needed supplies. That is why Jefferson dwells at such length upon the importance of maintaining government trading houses, where they already existed among Indian tribes, and urges Congress to consider carefully the question of establishing others. The Mississippi River, and the question of how to defend it, lie back of this entire discussion.

When we come to the second part of the message other questions appear, but the argument for the protection of the Mississippi still applies if instead of a French danger we will substitute a British danger as the inciting cause.

Fear of British designs on Upper Mississippi. We have seen how Mackenzie believed that the boundary between the United States and Great Britain in the Northwest would be completed by drawing a line to a navigable point on the Mississippi, say just below St. Anthony's Falls in latitude forty-five degrees, and that he insisted also on drawing a line from that point west "until it terminates in the Pacific Ocean to the south of the Columbia."

Since the northern boundary of Louisiana, which was then still a Spanish territory, had never been definitely ascertained, it might not have proved difficult for Great Britain to push her boundary south to the forty-fifth parallel, or even lower. But it was clearly against the interest of the United States that she would do so, because it would endanger the upper Mississippi even

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as the French occupation would endanger the lower Mississippi.

Alertness of the American government. When, early in the year 1803, it seemed to our government a wise policy to seek an alliance with Great Britain against the French, in case Napoleon should refuse to sell New Orleans and West Florida, Monroe and Livingston were authorized to pass over from Paris to London for that purpose. They were definitely instructed, however, not to yield to Great Britain the privilege of gaining for herself territory west of the upper Mississippi. That she would ask that privilege Secretary of State Madison thought likely, for three reasons: her desire "to extend her domain to the Mississippi, the uncertain extent of her claims, from north to south, beyond the western limits of the United States, and the attention she has paid to the Northwest Coast of America." Gallatin, at about the same time, thought we might be obliged to take immediate possession of northern Louisiana "to prevent G[reat] B[ritain] from doing the same." Gallatin considered that "the future destinies of the Missouri country are of vast importance to the United States." [1]

The political advantage of controlling the Columbia. If the control of the Mississippi, down to latitude forty-five degrees, would entitle Great Britain to sweep westward along that parallel to the Pacific, as Mac-

[1] He suggested that Captain Lewis, on his expedition to the West, should be instructed to examine carefully into the means by which a British attempt on the Missouri could be frustrated.

kenzie suggested, then the possession of the mouth of the Columbia, and the territory south on the Pacific to the same parallel would justify a claim of territory eastward to the Mississippi. In other words, the British could be prevented from gaining territory west of the Mississippi in two ways: first, by making our own people strong on the Missouri; second, by gaining control of the Columbia.

An Exploring Expedition justified from several points of view. Now an expedition which would ascend the Missouri to the source of one of its principal branches, find a connection with a branch of the Columbia, and descend that river to the sea would be perfectly adapted to secure for the United States both of these advantages. Jefferson said of such an expedition: "An intelligent officer, with ten or twelve men fit for the enterprise, and willing to undertake it, might explore the whole line, even to the Western Ocean, have conferences with the natives on the subject of commercial intercourse, get admission among them for our traders, as others are admitted, agree on a convenient deposit for an interchange of articles, and return with the information acquired in the course of two summers."

Here the President speaks only of commercial and scientific objects. These were important. But the political objects were possibly not less important. At all events, through a combination of favouring circumstances Jefferson was now enabled to execute a long cherished exploring enterprise destined to establish an overland route to the Pacific.

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CHAPTER IV

OPENING A HIGHWAY TO THE PACIFIC

Plan of organization; Captain Meriwether Lewis. Jefferson's plan for carrying out the exploring project was to appoint an army officer as leader, and let him select a few men from the military posts, wherever they could best be spared. In this way he would not only secure men trained to obey a commander, which was an important point, but would be enabled to fit out the expedition at slight expense; for the soldiers and officers would continue to draw their regular pay from the military department. His choice for leadership fell upon Meriwether Lewis, a young Virginian, brought up in the neighbourhood of Monticello, who had long been a favourite of Jefferson. He was of good family, was fairly well educated, and had many gifts both of mind and person. From boyhood Lewis had been fond of hunting, and had made himself an excellent woodsman. He was also an enthusiastic student of plants and animals, was inured to the hardships and discipline of camp life, and understood the character and customs of the American Indians. For a number of years he had been in the regular army, but at this time held the office of private secretary to

the President. His qualifications were admirable in so many respects, that in spite of some lack of scientific training, Jefferson "could have no hesitation in confiding the enterprise to him." He knew Lewis to be "honest, disinterested, of sound understanding, and a fidelity to truth so scrupulous that whatever he should report would be as certain as if seen by ourselves." Besides, he was "steady in the maintenance of discipline," and would be "careful as a father of those committed to his charge."

William Clark. It was at Lewis's suggestion that the President appointed a second officer to share the command of the party, and the man to fill the post was also selected by the young captain. By a curious chance the individual chosen was William Clark, younger brother of the celebrated western general, George Rogers Clark, to whom Jefferson had made the first proposal of an overland journey to the Pacific in 1783. Like Lewis, Clark was a man of military experience, having served under General Wayne ("Mad Anthony") in the campaign against the Ohio Indians. He had travelled widely in the West, on several occasions even crossing the Mississippi. Clark was a few years older than Lewis, and differed from him in being less imaginative and enthusiastic; but in all respects he was a worthy companion, splendidly qualified to share the responsibility of the great enterprise. The two leaders were peculiarly fitted to work together harmoniously, and did so from the beginning to the end of the expedition.

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Instructions. The main object. Jefferson personally prepared the instructions which were to govern the leaders in their work. "The object of your mission," he wrote to Lewis, "is to explore the Missouri River and such principal stream of it as, by its course and communication with the waters of the Pacific Ocean, whether the Columbia, Oregon, Colorado, or some other river, may offer the most direct and practical water communication across the continent for the purpose of commerce."

Notes and records. They were to keep careful records day by day of the distances travelled and the points of interest along the route. All noteworthy geographical features, such as the mouths of tributary rivers, rapids, falls, and islands, were to be accurately located with respect to latitude and longitude, so that a correct map of the rivers followed and the portages between them could be drawn from the explorers' notes. The President suggested that several copies of these notes should be made in order to guard against their loss by accident; and also "that one of these copies be on the cuticular membranes of the paper-birch as being less liable to injury from damp than common paper." The officers were urged to induce as many of the men as possible to keep diaries, and several of them did so.

Dealing with Indians. Full instructions were given about dealing with the Indian tribes along the route, the explorers being required to "treat them in the most friendly and conciliatory manner which their

own conduct will admit"; they were to impress upon the red men that the United States was not only their friend, but that she was a great and strong power able to afford them full protection. If possible, they should arrange to have a few influential chiefs visit Washington.

Other matters. The President made his instructions complete enough to cover every detail of the work proposed. Climate, soil, plants, animals, curious geological remains, Indian legends — all these and other matters were to be kept in mind, and all possible information secured concerning them. "Should you reach the Pacific Ocean," he said, "inform yourself whether the furs of those parts may not be collected as advantageously at the head of the Missouri . . . as at Nootka Sound or any other point of that coast." If so, the trade not only of the Missouri and Columbia, but of the Northwest Coast as well, might be carried across the continent to the eastern seaboard of the United States. One of the most pleasing paragraphs in the instructions is that in which the humane philosopher says to Lewis, "We wish you to err on the side of your safety, and to bring back your party safe, even if it be with less information."

Preparations. Gathering the party. Captain Lewis spent several weeks in Philadelphia, under scientific instructors, and then set out for the West. He expected to get under way up the Missouri before the end of the year 1803. But delays at Pittsburg, where a drunken boat builder kept him waiting a

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month, and difficulties in navigating the Ohio during low water, wore away the summer. Clark joined him in Kentucky, and at several of the western posts soldiers were enlisted for the journey. Of these there were four sergeants and twenty-three privates, including nine Kentucky hunters. Two French interpreters, the Indian wife of one of these (Sacajawea), and Clark's burly negro, York, completed the party. Sixteen additional soldiers and water men were engaged to accompany the expedition as far as the villages of Mandan Indians.[1]

The first winter. The winter of 1803–1804 was passed in camp at the mouth of the river Du Bois, opposite the Missouri. Captain Clark spent most of his time in drilling the men, building boats, and making other necessary arrangements about the establishment; while Lewis purchased supplies at St. Louis, and gathered information concerning the route from traders who thus early were familiar with the river as far as the Mandan villages. He frequently visited the American officers, and other persons of note in the little French hamlet, so soon to become an important American town. On the 9th of March he witnessed the ceremony of lowering the foreign flag and raising the emblem of our own country over the territory of upper Louisiana.

[1] The muster roll of the party, on leaving Fort Mandan, is given in Coues's "Lewis and Clark Expedition," New York, 1891, I, p. 253, note. Much interesting matter on the persons composing the party is contained in Eva Emery Dye's "Conquest," Chicago, 1902.

The start. La Charette. By the 14th of May the final touches had been given to the preparations, and the exploring party commenced the historic journey across the continent. Their supplies, instruments, articles for trade and presents for the Indians were carried in a flotilla consisting of three boats: one was a keel boat of twenty-two oars, with deck, sail, and breastworks; the other two were small craft, of six and seven oars respectively. Many of the leading citizens of St. Louis turned out to see them off. As the boats toiled up the swift-flowing Missouri they were often hailed from the banks by groups of French settlers, and sometimes by companies of Americans who were already beginning to emigrate to this newly opened region of the West. At St. Charles they made a halt of several days, and it was not till the 25th of May that the explorers passed La Charette, the home of Daniel Boone, and the last settlement on the Missouri. From this point their path lay wholly within the Indian country.

They meet up-river traders. On the 5th of June they "met a raft of two canoes joined together, in which two French traders were descending from eighty leagues up the Kansas River, where they had wintered and caught great quantities of beaver." Nine days later they encountered another party of traders coming down from the Platte. The 4th of July was celebrated by the firing of the big gun, and apparently in other ways, for one of the journalists says that a man was snake-bitten.

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Indian council; Council Bluff; death of Charles Floyd. On the east side of the Missouri, near the mouth of Platte River, Lewis and Clark held councils with the Oto and Missouri Indians, giving the chiefs medals to hang about their necks, distributing flags, and leaving other tokens of American supremacy. The place of the gathering they named Council Bluff, noting that here was a good situation for a fort and trading house. The soil was good for brick, wood was convenient, and the air was "pure and healthy." One other incident of this part of the journey is deserving of notice. On the 20th of August, when the party was passing the site of the present Sioux City, Sergeant Charles Floyd died and was buried by his companions near the river. This is the only death that occurred on the entire journey.

Missouri River landscape. Buffalo. The country afforded little variety of landscape as day by day the exploring party moved along the course of the Missouri. Almost everywhere was the narrow fringe of forest, running down to the water's edge, while here and there a wood-covered island divided the current of the river. Parallel to the stream, and at varying distances from it, low ranges of hills separated the valley from the broad prairie beyond. Deep ravines, cutting across the line of bluffs, opened natural highways from river to upland, and these were often worn down by the hoofs of the buffalo, which regularly followed such paths in search of water. Immense herds of these animals were seen, and many were slain by the

hunters, adding not a little to the good cheer that enlivened the evening camp.

Arrival at the Mandan villages; Fort Mandan; the winter's work; British traders. About the end of October they reached the villages of the Mandan Indians, within the present boundaries of North Dakota. The sharp night frosts warning them of approaching winter, it was decided to establish quarters here. A site was chosen, cottonwood and elm logs were brought from the river bottom, and a "fort" built. This consisted simply of two rows of rude block-houses, placed in the form of a letter "V," with shed roofs rising from the inner sides. A row of strong posts, or palisades, completed the triangle. Such was Fort Mandan, where Lewis and Clark spent the long, severe, yet busy and not unpleasant winter of 1804–1805. Many things required to be done. There were notes to copy, reports to write, maps to draw; articles of interest found on the trip up the Missouri must be prepared for submission to the President; new boats were needed for the upward journey. These preparations occupied the leaders during a large part of the winter; but they took occasion, also, to visit all of the surrounding Indian tribes, and to make the best arrangements possible concerning future trade with them. British traders from the far north visited them at Mandan during the winter, and carried back to the posts of the Northwest Company and to Montreal re-

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ports concerning the American party which was on its way to the Pacific.

Up the Missouri again. The Yellowstone. In March the thaw came, and soon the Missouri was once more free of ice. On the 7th of April, after starting the keel boat down the river, the eager travellers proceeded on their way rejoicing in the expectation of soon beholding the River of the West, and the great ocean which was the object of their search. Before the month closed they passed the mouth of the Yellowstone, where the plains were "animated by vast herds of buffalo, deer, elk, and antelope," usually so tame that they allowed the hunter to come very near them, "and often followed him quietly for some distance." Beaver, too, were especially abundant here. From Indian travellers Lewis obtained a good account of the Yellowstone, and the country through which it flows. Near its confluence with the Missouri was "a situation highly eligible for a trading establishment."

The grizzly bear. Other terrors. One form of game found in this region was rather tamer than the explorers desired it to be, the grizzly bears, with which they had many thrilling encounters. On one occasion, when he had just discharged his rifle at a buffalo, Captain Lewis discovered one of these terrible animals rushing furiously toward him, with jaws distended, ready to tear him in pieces. There were no trees at hand, and the captain had barely time to reach the river bank and leap into the water, when he was able

to frighten the beast off with his halberd. Other terrors were not wanting. A buffalo bull storming through camp after dark, a night fire and falling tree trunk, dangerous rapids, the upsetting of a boat — these are but hints to indicate the nature of the experiences with which the days and nights were filled, as the explorers pushed on through this wild but interesting region, toward the sources of the great Missouri.

The interlocking rivers. After some difficulty at the Three Forks, they ascended what they called the Jefferson branch, and on the 12th of August Captain Lewis, with one division of the party, arrived at the headsprings of the river, high up near the summit of the Rockies, in a spot "which had never yet been seen by civilized man." On the same day he crossed over to "a handsome bold creek of cold, clear water," *flowing westward.* The interlocking rivers, one flowing to the Atlantic, the other to the Pacific, had at last been found.

The Shoshones. Sacajawea. It was not long before he discovered a party of Shoshone Indians, from whom, after much delay, horses were procured for the journey to the navigable waters of the Columbia. At this point the Indian woman, Sacajawea, proved extremely helpful, for she belonged to the tribe of Shoshones and turned out to be the sister of a leading chief.

Character of the west slope of the Rockies; problem of the route. The explorers were now face to

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face with the most serious problem encountered during the journey. The western slope of the Rockies differed greatly from the eastern in being much more rugged and precipitous, with deep cañons through which the rivers rushed and swirled for great distances, until finally, on emerging from the mountains, they became navigable for boats. The travellers had been able to ascend the Missouri, to its source, with comparative ease, following along the river valley which usually was free from serious obstructions, a plain and easy path, sloping so gradually that it appeared to be almost level. Now they must make their way over sharp ridges, through terrific mountain defiles, choked with fallen timber and masses of rock débris. Moreover, they had no satisfactory way of determining what route to take, or how far they would be obliged to travel before reaching navigable water. It was necessary to follow the advice of their Shoshone friends to some extent, but the leaders soon found that this could not be relied upon altogether.

Clark discovers and names Lewis River. As a preparatory step, Captain Clark explored a way down Salmon River to its junction with a larger river to which he gave the name of his friend Lewis.[1] But he learned that this stream was unnavigable for many miles below the point reached, and that it would be impossible to follow its course through the cañon. He therefore returned, and the explorers decided to cross over to the river which flowed northward (Clark's

[1] It is now commonly called "Snake River."

Fork). This they would follow to a point below, where an Indian road, the Lolo Trail, was said to cross the Bitter Root Mountains to the mouth of the north branch of the Clearwater. For nearly a month they threaded dark forests, over steep hills, rocks, and fallen trees; made their way along dangerous cliffs; crossed raging torrents, whose icy waters chilled both men and animals. Sometimes they encountered storms of sleet and snow, again the "weather was very hot and oppressive." Most of the men became sick, and all were much reduced in strength. Food was so scanty that they were compelled to kill and eat some of the travel-worn horses.

Navigating the Columbia to the sea; under the shadow of Mt. Hood. At the place where the north fork of the Clearwater joins the river of that name, the party prepared five canoes, and on the morning of the 7th of October entered upon the last stage of their eventful journey. The difficulties of travel were nearly over, for the boats glided swiftly down the current, and ten days brought them to the confluence of the Lewis and Columbia. Here they were greeted by a procession of two hundred Indians, marching in their honour to the music of primitive drums. In two weeks they passed the Great Falls (Celilo), Long Narrows (Dalles), and Cascades, reaching on the 2nd of November the tide-water section of the river. Then, on the 7th of November, they heard the breakers roar, and soon saw, spreading and rolling before them, the waves

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of the western ocean—" the object of our labours, the reward of all our anxieties."

Establish winter quarters; Fort Clatsop. The purpose of the expedition had been achieved. A highway across the continent of North America was now an established fact, and all that remained to be done was to carry back the news of the great discovery. Jefferson had instructed Lewis to find, if possible, a ship on the Pacific by which some or all of the party might return to the United States with the journals of the expedition. But, while traders sometimes entered the Columbia, as the natives testified, no vessel appeared during the winter of 1805–1806. All that could be done was to spend the rainy season on the Oregon coast, and take up the return march overland in the spring. At a place three miles above the mouth of the Netal (now called Lewis and Clark River), on the "first point of high land on its western bank," the explorers erected a low-roofed log building to which, in honour of the neighbouring tribe of Indians, they gave the name of Fort Clatsop.[1] The location was by no

[1] The Netal enters Meriwether's, now called Young's, Bay. The fort was located two hundred yards from the bank of the river. It was in the form of a square, 50x50 feet. Two cabins, one of three, the other of four, rooms, occupied two sides. Between them was the parade ground, the ends of which were closed by means of posts or palisades. In the June (1904) number of *Scribner's Magazine*, Mr. Reuben Gold Thwaites publishes for the first time the ground plan of Fort Clatsop. The drawing was found by him while searching among Clark's papers, "traced upon the rough elk-skin cover of his field book."

means ideal, for the party was in need of food, and in this region game was not very plentiful. The winter at Fort Clatsop was therefore a time of real hardship, relieved by the hope of a speedy return to homes beyond the mountains. The shelter was completed on the last day of December; the next morning "a volley of small arms" was fired "to salute the new year." Some of the men were kept busy hunting the lean elk, on which the party was forced to subsist; others were sent to the seacoast — seven miles distant — to manufacture a supply of salt. At the fort the officers busied themselves with the notes and journals of the expedition.

Completing the great map. On the 11th of February Clark finished the great map of the overland route, so often printed, and a copy of a part of which is found in this book. A little trade with the Chinooks and Clatsops (mainly for dogs, fish, and wapato roots) formed the chief diversion during this tedious winter.

The return begun March 23, 1806; arrive at St. Louis September 23, 1806. The days dragged painfully by till the 23d of March, when our travellers commenced the homeward journey. Before setting out they distributed written statements among the Indians, explaining who it was that had so mysteriously come to their country from the land of the rising sun. These the natives were instructed to show to any white men who should visit the river. The journey eastward was not without its difficulties. The tribes along the river demanded high prices for horses and dogs, and the



The Lewis and Clark map executed at Fort Clatsop



Astoria in 1813



stock of goods carried by the explorers was soon exhausted. But both Lewis and Clark were skilled in the use of common remedies for the diseases which prevailed among the Indians, and by selling their "drugs" at a high price they were able to buy the supplies which were indispensable to them. The snow still lay deep in the gulches when the party reached the western base of the Rocky Mountains, impeding their progress for many days; but in spite of all obstacles, they made the journey with complete success, reaching St. Louis on the 23d of September, just six months out from the mouth of the Columbia.[1]

[1] Captain Lewis went at once to Washington to make his report to President Jefferson. Soon afterward he was appointed governor of Missouri Territory, but died very suddenly and mysteriously, in 1809, at the early age of thirty-five.

Captain Clark was for many years the United States superintendent of Indian affairs for the West, with headquarters at St. Louis. He died in 1838.

The journals of the expedition, very much amended and abbreviated, were first published in 1814 under the editorship of Nicholas Biddle. Many editions, based upon this one, have appeared since that time, the most satisfactory being that by Dr. Elliott Coues, New York, 1891, 3 vols. A new edition, containing a literal transcript of the complete journals, and much matter relating to the expedition not hitherto published, was issued in 1905 under the editorship of Reuben Gold Thwaites, LL. D.

CHAPTER V

THE FUR TRADE ON THE COLUMBIA

Lewis's first report. Arriving at St. Louis, on the 23rd of September, 1806, Captain Lewis wrote to Jefferson to give him a summary of what had been accomplished since the party left the Mandan villages in April, 1804, nearly two and one-half years previously.[1]

Description of the route. In the first part of the letter he describes the route pursued, and affirms his belief that it constitutes the best available line of communication across the continent. Of this line the Missouri makes 2575 miles, while 340 miles of land carriage connect the navigable part of the Missouri with the navigable part of the Columbia. Of the 340 miles of land carriage, 200 miles is along a good road, while 140 miles is "over tremendous mountains which for 60 miles are covered with eternal snows."

Despite the obstacle of the mountains, the passage, he says, is practicable from the last of June to the last of September, while owing to the abundance and the cheapness of horses among the Indians, the cost of transporting goods over that stretch of road would be

[1] Thwaites. Original Journals of Lewis & Clark, V, VII, pp. 334-337.

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very light. The Columbia could be navigated safely from the first of April to the middle of August.

Advantages for the fur trade; that trade should tend westward not eastward. Lewis considered the new route as offering special advantages for the development of a fur trade.[1] The greater part of the letter is devoted to an outline of the plan upon which this trade should be carried on. This outline, by the man who had actually investigated the subject at first hand, differed widely from that suggested to him by Jefferson in the instructions of April, 1803. Jefferson wished to know if the furs of the Columbia and those collected along the Pacific, as well as the Missouri River furs, might not be carried overland, by the Columbia and the Missouri, to the United States. Lewis found, on the contrary, that the furs of the upper Missouri streams might be carried across the mountains to the Columbia, where, their volume swelled by the furs collected on the Columbia and its branches, they could be carried to the mouth of the Columbia each year by the first of August. Thence they could be shipped to Canton, China, where they would arrive earlier than the annual shipments from

[1] He does not think it equal to the route around South America for the transportation of East Indian goods to the United States and thence to Europe, although "many articles not bulky, brittle, or of a perishable nature may be conveyed to the United States by this route with more facility and less expense than by that at present practised."

His reference to oriental trade, in this letter, shows that the subject had been discussed between Jefferson and Lewis.

Montreal arrive in England. This advantage in time of marketing the furs, would prove so attractive, that Lewis apparently thought the Northwest Company of Canada also would seek the privilege of conveying their furs from the region south and west of Lake Winnipeg to the mouth of the Columbia for shipment to China.

By establishing stations on the Columbia at various points, and employing a sufficient number of men to handle the business effectively, Lewis foresaw that East India commodities might be carried up the Columbia each spring, and about July these could be exchanged at the upper stations for the furs brought from east of the mountains. The furs would be carried down the river to be shipped across the Pacific; the India goods would reach St. Louis by the end of September each year.

The richest fur country. Lewis considered the Rocky Mountain branches of the Missouri, and all of its streams as far east as the mouth of the Cheyenne, to be "richer in beaver and otter than any other country on earth." The Columbia had fewer beaver and otter, but yet considerable numbers of them, and in addition a variety of other fur bearing animals, bears, the tiger cat, foxes, the martin, etc.

Government aid suggested. He concludes this section of his letter with the words: "If the government will only aid even on a limited scale the enterprise of her citizens I am convinced that we shall soon derive the benefits of a most lucrative trade from this source and in the course of ten or twelve years a tour across

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the continent by this route will be undertaken with as little concern as a voyage across the Atlantic is at present."

The suggestion in Lewis's letter that the Northwest Company of Canada would probably seek the lower Columbia for the sake of the China market is interesting in view of the activities of that company at this very time.

Plans of the Northwest Company; Mackenzie's plan again; its execution deferred. We recall that Mackenzie, in 1801, published his plan for a union of the Hudson Bay and Northwest companies with a view to engross the fur trade of the entire region of North America above the forty-fifth parallel. This plan contemplated utilizing the mouth of the Columbia on the Pacific and Hudson Bay on the Atlantic side as the sea-ports serving a world trade, the two ports being connected by a great line of trading posts along the main water courses east and west of the Rockies. Troubles in Canada, between the two great companies, and within the Northwest Company's group itself, delayed all plans of carrying the trade into the region beyond the Rockies explored in part by Mackenzie in 1793.

The company crosses the Rockies. In 1805, the Northwest Company, stimulated by a knowledge of the effects of the Lewis and Clark expedition, resolved to plant trading stations west of the Rocky Mountains in, as they supposed from Mackenzie's report, the region of the Columbia River. Mr. Simon Fraser in the

autumn of that year, planted the first of those stations, Fort McLeod, in latitude 55° north.[1] Thus, while Lewis and Clark were wintering at Fort Clatsop, within the sound of the breakers of the Pacific, a small party left by Fraser spent the winter west of the Rockies, in the far interior, nearly nine degrees of latitude to the northward, on the shores of Lake McLeod.

Fraser's new trading posts; exploring the great river. In 1806 Fraser founded two other stations, Fort St. James, on Stuart Lake, and Fort Fraser at Fraser Lake. Then, in the spring of 1807, came orders for him to explore the great river still believed to be the Columbia, in order to limit American activities and to find a more practicable route than the one by Peace River for the trade into the trans-Rocky Mountain region.[2] With incredible difficulty, Fraser descended the great river in the summer of 1808, reaching the sea coast in July, to find, on determining its latitude, that the river was not the Columbia at all!

David Thompson. When Fraser was beginning his preparations for descending the river he supposed to be the Columbia, David Thompson was crossing the Rockies at Howse Pass. He reached, on June 22, 1807, a tributary of the real Columbia but, while he spent much time during the years following on the upper waters of the river, it was not till four years later that he descended to its mouth. When he did so he encountered the Astor party who had already con-

[1] Morice. The Northern Interior of British Columbia, 54.
[2] Morice, p. 70-71.

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structed a fort, Astoria, and were ready to ascend the river to begin the fur trade in regions previously visited by Thompson.

Commercial strategy and the Columbia. In the development of the western fur trade of the United States a natural development, after Lewis and Clark's journey, would have been to carry that trade into the uniquely rich beaver and otter regions of the upper Missouri, thence across into the mountain country where multitudes of streams flow westward to form the Columbia, and finally along the Columbia to the sea. This doubtless would have been the course of evolution, had not commercial strategy seemed to demand the prompt occupation by Americans of the mouth of the Columbia. Mackenzie had urged the importance of such an occupation, from the Canadian point of view, in 1801. The Northwest Company, fearing that the Lewis and Clark exploration boded an American occupation, were straining every effort to anticipate the Americans. Under the circumstances, it would not do to allow many years to pass, while trade was laboriously pushing its way westward across the Rockies and down the Columbia, before occupying the dominating position at the mouth of the great river itself.

This was the reasoning of Mr. John Jacob Astor, who was one of the most far-sighted and statesmanlike among the American merchants of the day.

Astor had been engaged in a world trade, from New York, for a quarter of a century. He early began to

specialize in furs, making up many of his cargoes at Montreal, the headquarters of the Northwest Company.

As he bought the Northwest Company's bales of beaver and otter skins for the purpose of a world exchange, Astor studied the methods and the organization by which the primary fur trade of the wilderness was conducted.

Astor's trading project. When Lewis and Clark returned from their journey, with information about the route to the Pacific and the opportunities for trade along the Missouri and Columbia rivers, Mr. Astor planned a brilliant trading project, similar in many ways to that of Mackenzie. He believed it would be possible, with his large capital and tested business ability, to gain control of the trade over a broad belt of country stretching from the Great Lakes to the Pacific Ocean. The first point was to push westward to the Mississippi and the Missouri. For this purpose he organized (1808) the American Fur Company, in which Astor himself was the principal stockholder. Next he proposed to establish a central station, at the mouth of the Columbia, for the trade of the region lying beyond the Rocky Mountains, and build a line of trading posts along the route explored by Lewis and Clark from the Pacific Ocean to the Mississippi.[1] He planned to send from New York every fall one ship freighted with

[1] Astor had already begun a trade along the Great Lakes, so that practically the great depot on the Pacific would be connected with his business office in New York.

Retain at
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The mouth of the Columbia; vessel standing in between the capes



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goods for the Indian trade, and supplies for all the posts west of the Rocky Mountains. On arriving in the Columbia, about February or March, she was to unload this portion of her cargo and sail along the coast to gather the sea otter and other furs which the natives had long been accustomed to sell to American shipowners who visited those coasts at irregular intervals. This cruise was to be extended as far north as Sitka, for the purpose of carrying supplies to the Russians in exchange for their furs.[1] Thereafter she was to return to the Columbia. Meantime, in May or June, the traders from the interior posts would have delivered at the central station all the furs secured during the preceding winter on the rivers flowing into the Columbia. These were then to be placed on board the vessel, which would sail to Canton during the following winter. The cargo of furs was to be exchanged for an equally valuable cargo of silks, tea, and other Chinese goods, with which the Astor ship was expected to return to New York after an absence of about two years.

He sends the Tonquin to the Columbia. Such was the plan worked out in all its details by Mr. Astor before any part of it was put into operation. In the summer of 1810 he fitted out his first ship, the *Ton-*

[1] At Sitka (New Archangel) the Russian American Fur Company collected furs from the neighbouring islands, the Alaskan coast, and the interior. But they had very poor facilities both for marketing their product and obtaining necessary supplies. They were glad of the opportunity to make arrangements with Mr. Astor by which their furs were to be carried to the Canton market and regular supplies brought to New Archangel.

quin, for the voyage around Cape Horn. She was placed in charge of Captain Jonathan Thorn, and left New York under the convoy of the famous American warship *Constitution.* On board the *Tonquin* were several of the partners of the Pacific Fur Company, organized by Mr. Astor to carry out his project. Most of these had been engaged in Canada, among the men belonging to the Northwest Company. The clerks, too, were nearly all Canadians.[1] The *Tonquin* left New York on the 6th of September, 1810, rounded Cape Horn in December, and two months later arrived at the Hawaiian Islands. The voyage thus far had been without serious accident, but was marred by almost ceaseless wrangling between the captain and the Canadian partners. While a good disciplinarian, and doubtless a very successful commander on a ship of war, Captain Thorn was not well qualified to manage a group of independent Scotch and American fur traders.

Arrival at the Columbia; Astoria. When the ship arrived off the mouth of the Columbia, March 22, 1811, new difficulties arose. The waves were running high, and the line of breakers across the entrance to the river struck terror to the hearts of inexperienced sailors. Yet the captain sent out men in the ship's boat to sound the channel, a proceeding in which seven of the little company lost their lives. Three days passed

[1] For a delightful account of the way these Canadians went down to New York, by boat, to await the sailing of the *Tonquin,* see Franchere's Narrative, New York, 1854, pp. 23-25.

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before the *Tonquin* crossed the bar and anchored safe in the river. Then the Astor party selected a site for their fort, and began the erection of the Pacific coast emporium of the fur trade, which was appropriately named Astoria. "Spring, usually so tardy in this latitude," says Franchere, "was already well advanced; the foliage was budding, and the earth was clothing itself with verdure. We imagined ourselves in the garden of Eden."

Fate of the Tonquin. On the 5th of June the *Tonquin* left the river on her northern cruise in search of furs.[1] From this voyage she never returned, nor did a single one of the fated men who sailed in her from Astoria live to tell the gruesome story of the *Tonquin's* destruction. That awful tale is known only from the report of a Gray's Harbour Indian, who was taken on board as an interpreter to the northern tribes, and who escaped death when the ship was blown to atoms, with several hundred natives on board, in the bay of Clayoquot.

The overland party; Wilson Price Hunt. About the time of the *Tonquin's* arrival on the Pacific coast another detachment of Astor's men was preparing to cross the continent by following the trail of Lewis and Clark. This company was under the direction of

[1] One of the partners, Mr. Alexander Mackay, was on board as chief trader. He was a former Northwest Company man, and had been the companion of Mackenzie on his famous journey to the Pacific in 1793. He was a man of ability, very popular among his associates, and his death in the *Tonquin* disaster was deeply lamented.

Mr. Wilson Price Hunt of New Jersey, an American partner, to whom Astor had confided the chief management of the Pacific department of the fur trade. He collected most of his men in Canada, at Montreal and Mackinac, carrying them to St. Louis in the fall of 1810 in boats, by way of the Fox and Wisconsin rivers, and the Mississippi. They spent the winter in a camp near the frontier of settlement on the Missouri, and in March began the ascent of the river.[1] At the Aricara villages (near the present northern boundary of South Dakota) they learned that the Blackfoot Indians were hostile, and therefore decided to leave the river, making their way overland with horses in a southwesterly direction, to the Big Horn and Wind River mountains. They crossed these ranges and entered the Green River valley. Passing over the divide

[1] Bradbury, an English naturalist, to whose "Travels in America" we owe the preservation of many of the incidents of the trip as far as the Aricara villages, tells us (p. 16): "On leaving Charette, Mr. Hunt pointed out to me an old man, standing on the bank, who he informed me was Daniel Boone, the discoverer of Kentucky. As I had a letter of introduction to him, from his nephew, Colonel Grant, I went ashore to speak to him. . . . I remained for some time in conversation with him. He informed me that he was eighty-four years of age; that he had spent a considerable portion of his time alone in the backwoods, and had lately returned from his spring hunt with nearly sixty beaver skins." Irving, after reading this statement of Bradbury, suggested that the veteran woodsman probably felt a "throb of the old pioneer spirit, impelling him to shoulder his rifle and join the adventurous band." Though he failed to do so in person, his children crossed the Rockies, and we meet his name in both Oregon and California.

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to Snake River, they then decided to abandon their horses and take to canoes. This was an unfortunate error, for the stream soon, contrary to appearances, proved itself a true mountain torrent, threatening destruction to both men and boats. They therefore left it (at the Cauldron Linn) and set out on foot, after breaking the company into smaller parties to make it easier to find game. The sufferings of these men, in their weary wanderings over the Snake River desert, are more easily imagined than described, although Mr. Irving, in his classic history of the Astoria enterprise, has succeeded in giving us some very vivid pictures. Hunt, with a section of the party, reached the Grand Ronde valley at the close of the year, and on the 15th of February arrived at Astoria. Some had already reached the fort; others straggled in from time to time, till nearly all were safe.

Ship Beaver arrives, May 10, 1812. Soon after this overland party reached the lower Columbia, Mr. Astor's ship, the *Beaver,* sent from New York in the fall of 1811, anchored (May 10, 1812) in the Columbia River with a cargo similar in all respects to that carried by the *Tonquin* the year before. The Astorians were greatly rejoiced. At last they had abundant supplies, new reinforcements of men, and every encouragement to carry the trade far up the rivers toward the sources of the Columbia. It began to look as if Astor's project might be grandly successful after all, despite the calamities which attended its beginnings.

The Northwesters lose the race; David Thomp-

son. In the preceding year, before the fort had been completed at the mouth of the river, a party of men prepared to ascend the Columbia for exploration and trade; but just as they were setting out (July 15), to the astonishment of the Americans, a canoe floating the British flag drew in to the shore at Astoria. A gentleman stepped ashore, and introduced himself as Mr. David Thompson, geographer of the Northwest Company. He said that he had expected to reach the mouth of the river during the preceding fall, and had actually wintered west of the Rockies, but that owing to the desertion of some of his men it was impossible to carry out his plans. The Astorians believed it was his intention to plant a fort for his company near the spot where their own establishment was rising, and in this they were doubtless correct. We now know, from Thompson's journal and other sources, that this indomitable British "pathfinder" had been on the Pacific slope several times prior to 1811, the first time as early as June, 1807. In 1809 he founded a Northwest Company fort at Lake Pend d'Oreille, and another in the Flathead country, on Clark's Fork. A still earlier establishment was that on the Kootenai, and now there was also one on the Spokane River. The Americans saw at once that here was a formidable rival for the up-river trade; but they knew their advantage as the occupants of the lower Columbia, and determined if possible to drive their Montreal competitors across the Rockies.

Fort Okanogan founded, 1811. The delayed

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party, under David Stuart, one of Astor's partners, now set out up the river, accompanied as far as the Cascades by Thompson on his return. When Stuart's party reached the place where the Columbia and Snake rivers meet they found a pole stuck in the ground, and tightly bound around it a sheet of paper containing the proclamation: "Know hereby that this country is claimed by Great Britain as part of its territories, that the Northwest Company of Merchants from Canada, finding the Factory for this people inconvenient for them, do hereby intend to erect a factory in this place for the convenience of the country around. D. Thompson." Notwithstanding this announcement, or possibly because of it, Stuart passed right on up the north branch to Okanogan River, where he established the first up-river fort for the Astor Company, and carried on a successful winter's trade.[1]

Expansion of trade in 1812. When the *Beaver* arrived in 1812, with men and supplies, the Astorians decided on a great forward movement to the interior. They proposed to go into the neighbourhood of every Northwest post and begin a rival establishment. Thus they planned a fort on the Spokane, with branch trading houses on the Flathead (Clark's Fork) and Koote-

[1] Alexander Ross, one of the clerks, who spent most of the winter alone at Okanogan, while Stuart was exploring far to the north in the She Whaps country, tells us in his book, "The Fur Hunters of the Far West," that he bought fifteen hundred beaver, worth in Canton twenty-five hundred pounds, for goods worth, not to exceed thirty-five pounds. This he calls a "specimen of our trade among the Indians."

nai rivers, and another in the She Whaps region. A third venture was to be made on Snake River, while the trade at Okanogan was to be continued.[1] The Spokane project was in charge of Mr. Clark, David Stuart went back to Okanogan, and Mr. Donald M'Kenzie was sent up Snake River. Both Clark and Stuart, with their clerks and assistants at the branch stations, succeeded admirably in the trade of this second winter. M'Kenzie did nothing on the Snake, and by the middle of January was back at Astoria, with an alarming story which foreshadowed coming events.

War news crosses the Rockies. While visiting Spokane House about the close of the year 1812, so M'Kenzie told the people at Astoria, Mr. John George M'Tavish, partner of the Northwest Company, had arrived fresh from Montreal, with news that war had broken out between the United States and Great Britain, and that the company was expecting an English warship to enter the Pacific and capture Astoria. At this time the fort was in charge of Donald M'Dougal, a Canadian like M'Kenzie, Hunt having sailed away the preceding summer in the *Beaver,* and being still absent. These two men weakly determined to abandon the Columbia the following summer and cross the mountains; but the other partners when they came down with their

[1] At the same time Mr. Robert Stuart was sent east with letters for Mr. Astor. His party became bewildered in the upper Snake River country, and were forced to winter on the plains, reaching St. Louis April 30, 1813, after being out nearly a year from Astoria.

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furs in June (1813) vetoed this plan, insisting on remaining another winter if possible. M'Tavish descended the river with his men, spent much time about Astoria, and received needed supplies from the Americans, while he waited for the ship, which, as he declared, was daily expected.

Movements of Mr. Hunt. Mr. Hunt sailed away in the *Beaver* on the 4th of August, 1812. He ran to Sitka, made a successful trade with the Russians, and then proceeded to the islands of St. Peter and St. Paul, where he received eighty thousand sealskins. By this time it was winter; the vessel was much damaged, and all haste had to be made to get the valuable cargo to Canton. The *Beaver,* therefore, did not stop at the Columbia, but carried Hunt to Hawaii and continued on to China. Here the captain (Sowles) obtained news of the war, which sent him into hiding with his vessel till it was over. Hunt finally learned of the war in Hawaii and came to the Columbia in an American ship, the *Albatross,* reaching Astoria August 4, 1813, after an absence of exactly one year. He learned that the partners were resolved to abandon the river, and while he opposed, he could not change the resolution. Still, hoping to save something, he sailed again in the *Albatross* to seek a vessel which might be available for the purpose of carrying away the goods and furs.

Astoria sold, October 16, 1813; taken by the Raccoon December 12 (or 13), 1813. At last, on the 16th of October, influenced by their fears if not by selfish motives, the partners sold Astoria and its be-

longings, with all furs, supplies, and other property at the interior stations as well, to the Northwest Company. One incident remains, and the story of Astoria is finished. "On the morning of the 30th" (November), says Franchere, "we saw a large vessel standing in under Cape Disappointment; . . . she was the British sloop-of-war, *Raccoon,* of twenty-six guns, commanded by Captain Black." . . . The long looked-for British ship had come, and on the 12th of December (Henry says the 13th) the American flag was hauled down at Astoria to make place for the Union Jack. The station itself was rechristened Fort George. More than two months later (February 28, 1814) Mr. Hunt appeared once more, in the brig *Pedlar,* purchased by him for the purpose of carrying away Astor's property. He was too late, and sailed away again, first to the north, then down the coast to California and Mexico.[1]

[1] Most of the Canadian partners of Mr. Astor accepted positions with the Northwest Company, as did also many of the clerks and labourers. A few, including Mr. Gabriel Franchere, went back to Canada overland in the spring of 1814, with the Northwest Company's express. Franchere's "Narrative," and two similar books, also by clerks of the Astor Company, A. Ross's "Fur Hunters of the Far West" and Ross Cox's "Adventures on the Columbia," are the principal sources for the history of the Astor enterprise. All of these have long been out of print. The "Henry-Thompson Journals," recently published, throw additional light on some phases of the history, and Irving's "Astoria" contains some matter taken from manuscript sources not now accessible.

CHAPTER VI

THE HUDSON BAY COMPANY

Changes on the Columbia. When Mr. Hunt bade farewell to the Columbia (April 2, 1814), he left the British rivals in full control not only of the fort at the mouth of the river, but of all the avenues of trade between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific, from California to Alaska. A few days later their first supply ship, the *Isaac Todd,* entered the river with a cargo containing everything necessary for the trade of the entire department. She also brought additional men, and these added to the list of Astorians already engaged, gave the Northwest Company a force sufficient to occupy the country at least as fully as Astor had done. They, however, made no important change in the trade for several years, till Donald M'Kenzie established the Walla Walla Fort (1818), and began to send trapping parties along Snake River. This greatly extended the area covered, and increased the profits in a marked degree.

Union of the British fur companies, 1821. In 1821 a noteworthy change occurred in the fur trade of the British dominions. The Hudson Bay and Northwest companies, whose agents had long been destroying each other in their bitter contest for the

possession of the northern forests, were now united under the name of the Hudson Bay Company.[1] The dream of Alexander Mackenzie had been realized. From Montreal to Fort George, from Fort George to the Arctic Ocean and Hudson Bay, the wilderness traffic was at last organized under a single management, and carried on absolutely without competition, except where the British came in contact with Americans or Russians. York Factory on Hudson Bay was the eastern emporium, and the residence of the company's governor, Sir George Simpson. The station near the mouth of the Columbia was to be the western emporium.

Dr. McLoughlin builds Fort Vancouver, 1824–1825. In 1824 Dr. John McLoughlin, accompanied by Governor Simpson, arrived on the Columbia to take charge of the western department. One of their first steps was to abandon Fort George and to establish new headquarters at Point Vancouver.[2] Here was an ideal location for a trading centre. The Willamette, entering the Columbia a short distance below, had its sources nearly two hundred miles to the south; the Cowlitz opened an avenue for trade toward Puget Sound; while for the Columbia itself, breaking through the Cascades a few miles above Vancouver, the site was

[1] In 1816 actual war broke out in the Red River valley, where Lord Selkirk had established a colony for the Hudson Bay Company, across the path of the Northwesters. The union was brought about by the intercession of government officials.

[2] The point reached and so named by Lieut. Broughton of the Vancouver Expedition in October, 1792.

the best that could be found. On a fine prairie about three quarters of a mile from the river, McLoughlin built the first Fort Vancouver, and occupied it in March, 1825. Four years later another establishment was built on the low ground near the river bank. It was simply a stockade made of posts about twenty feet in length, inclosing a rectangular space thirty-seven rods long by eighteen rods in width, which contained all the principal buildings, including Dr. McLoughlin's residence. The servants of the company, with their Indian families and friends, lived just outside, where in course of time a considerable village grew up. Such was the famous Fort Vancouver, round which clusters so much of the romance, as well as the more sober history, of early Oregon.[1] Dr. McLoughlin remained in charge of the establishment for twenty-two years, managing the company's business with rare success; and by his firm control over the Indians of the entire Oregon country, his kindness and hospitality to American traders, missionaries, adventurers and colonists, richly deserving the title, "Father of Oregon," bestowed upon him by the pioneers.

The fur trade at Vancouver. Vancouver was the clearing house for all the business west of the Rocky Mountains. Here the annual ships from London landed supplies and merchandise, which were placed in warehouses to await the departure of the boat brigades

[1] A fascinating picture of life at this western emporium of the fur trade is given by Mrs. Eva Emery Dye in her "McLoughlin and Old Oregon."

for the interior; here was the great fur house, where the peltries were brought together from scores of smaller forts and trading camps, scattered through a wilderness empire of half a million square miles. They came from St. James, Langley, and Kamloops in the far northwest; from Umpqua in the south; from Walla Walla, Colville, Spokane, Okanogan, and many other places in the upper portions of the great valley. Hundreds of trappers followed the water courses through the gloomy forests and into the most dangerous fastnesses of the mountains, in order to glean the annual beaver crop for delivery to these substations.

Profits of the western trade. The Hudson Bay Company is still engaged in business and the books of these early years are a part of its business files. They are not, and have never been, opened freely to the researches of scholars. Such information as we have respecting the profits of the Company's western fur trade has leaked out almost accidentally and we are still waiting for facts which the Company's records alone can fully reveal. In a letter written by McLoughlin to the Company in 1845 — his "Last Letter" [1] — Simpson is quoted as saying that the accounts from that field, which show the profits of the three years, 1841, 1842, and 1843 to be £22,974, £16,982, and £21,726 respectively are not accurate. He, in fact, figures for those years a net loss of over £5000, which looks on its face unreasonable. We have no means of

[1] Edited by Katherine B. Judson. See Am. Historical Review, XXI, pp. 127.



Fort Vancouver as sketched by Lieut. Henry Warre, 1845



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checking him. Assuming that the accounts presented by McLoughlin were correct, the net annual profit amounted in those years to a sum ranging from $80,000 to $115,000. In 1828 a visitor to Vancouver, the American trader Jedediah Smith, reported that McLoughlin had received during the year thirty thousand beaver skins worth $250,000, besides a large quantity of other furs.

Agriculture. Aside from the fur trade, which was the principal business, Vancouver was also the centre of other activities. By 1828 a fine farm had been opened on the prairie about the fort, and fields of wheat, oats, corn, peas, and barley flourished in the rich soil of this favoured locality. As the years passed, more and more land was brought under cultivation, until the farm aggregated several thousand acres, " fenced into beautiful corn fields, vegetable fields, orchards, gardens, and pasture fields, . . . interspersed with dairy houses, shepherds' and herdsmen's cottages." [1]

Livestock at Fort Vancouver. In 1814 the Northwest Company's ship *Isaac Todd* brought to the Columbia from California four head of Spanish cattle. The Astor people had brought a few hogs from Hawaii and they also had several goats. These were the beginnings of the livestock interests of the Pacific Northwest. The increase up to the time Dr. McLoughlin took control was by no means extraordinary, the cattle numbering, according to McLoughlin, only twenty-seven head in

[1] Quoted from Dunn, "The Oregon Territory and the British North American Fur Trade," Philadelphia, 1845, p. 107.

1825. McLoughlin, however, took steps at once to build up the herds and the flocks. He forbade the slaughtering of cattle [1] at that time and he says that the first beef was killed in 1838. By that time the native increase had brought up the herd to several hundred head and purchases of California cattle had increased it still more. Pigs, sheep, goats, and horses likewise became plentiful on the Vancouver ranges.

McLoughlin, while refusing to sell cattle, cheerfully loaned cows and oxen to the settlers and he also furnished work cattle to the Missions.

Grain raising. On taking possession of Vancouver fort, planting and sowing of grain became at once a fixed policy. The first year potatoes and peas only were grown. The second year McLoughlin procured and sowed small quantities each of wheat, corn, oats, barley, and timothy, all crops doing well except the corn. By 1828 he says the quantity of wheat raised was sufficient for the needs of the establishment.

French farmers in Oregon; American wheat raisers. In 1829 Etienne Lucier, a servant of the Hudson Bay Company, received assistance in seed and food supplies, cattle, etc., to begin farming in the Willamette Valley. Other servants of the company followed, until by 1843 some fifty families were living on French Prairie near the present town of Woodburn, and a few others were scattered here and there over the valley plain. When American settlers began to arrive they, too, were helped to become farmers and

[1] Except one bull calf each year for rennet to make cheese.

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wheat raisers, all agreeing to return the loans of seed grain in wheat and usually agreeing to sell their surplus to the Company at a fixed price.

The Fort was the market for all. The Company maintained a flouring mill, where settlers could have their wheat ground. Beginning in the year 1839, it supplied grain and flour regularly, under contract, to the Russian American Fur Company in Alaska. It also shipped to the Hawaiian Islands. McLoughlin estimated the export of flour for 1846 at 6,000 barrels, in addition to a cargo of wheat for Alaska.

Lumber and other exports; merchandise. Besides shipping grain and flour, the company sold lumber sawed in their mill near Vancouver, also salmon taken in the lower Columbia. They also supplied from their store at Vancouver and a branch store at Willamette Falls all kinds of merchandise and other supplies required by their servants, ex-servants, and the American settlers. New settlers received credit usually to the extent of their need until they could raise a crop of wheat, from the surplus of which the year's accounts were settled.

Mechanics. The fort had its mechanics, representing all the ordinary trades. There were besides farmers, gardeners and dairymen, smiths, carpenters, tinners, millwrights, coopers, and a baker, and all were kept fully occupied. The carpenters built boats for the river trade and even several coasting vessels. The coopers made barrels for shipping flour and salted salmon.

Social life at Vancouver. Although business was the first consideration at Vancouver, and Dr. McLoughlin would tolerate no idlers, yet, on the whole, life was pleasant there. The officers were nearly all well-educated gentlemen, who enjoyed good living, books, and agreeable company. Their dining hall at Vancouver was not merely a place where the tables were supplied with good food, but the scene of bright, intelligent conversation, conducted with perfect propriety, and pleasing to the most refined guests. The wives of the officers were usually half-caste women, yet in many cases they are said to have been excellent housekeepers and good mothers. They and their children did not eat with the men, but had tables in a separate hall. In other respects home life was much as it is in ordinary communities. The children spent most of the summer season out of doors, engaging in all manner of sports, and gaining special skill in horsemanship. In the winter a school was often maintained at the fort.[1] Religious services were conducted on the Sabbath, either by McLoughlin himself or by some visiting missionary or priest. The village had its balls, regattas, and other amusements, rendering it a place of much gaiety, especially about June, when the brigades of boats arrived with the up-river traders, and their crews of jovial, picturesque French voyageurs.

Monopoly methods; relations with settlers. The

[1] John Ball, a New England man who came with Wyeth in 1832, taught the first school at Vancouver in the winter of 1832-1833. He raised a crop of wheat in the Willamette valley in the summer of 1833.

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Hudson Bay Company was a monopoly not only in theory but in practice. It fixed its own prices for goods sold to settlers, usually charging one hundred per cent. on London prices,[1] and it paid for the settlers' wheat what it chose. In 1845 the price was sixty cents per bushel in trade. In both cases the price was probably as nearly fair as could be expected, but the feeling that they were at the Company's mercy was sure to make the American settlers impatient, critical, or even violently antagonistic to the Company. Had it not been for the respect universally felt for Dr. McLoughlin, this condition might easily have degenerated into a state of open hostility, with the possibility of bloodshed and serious international complications. In fact, only two or three Americans ever tried to molest the Company directly, and in these cases the public opinion of the colony was exerted successfully in the interest of harmony. On the whole, it must be admitted that Fort Vancouver was indispensable to the American settlers, was in fact the condition of Oregon's early colonization. Without it, the country must have remained a wilderness until similar establishments had been founded by Americans or others. If Astor's trading venture had proved successful, Astoria would logically have occupied the place in Oregon history which Vancouver now occupies. Yet, it is doubtful if an American company could have served better the needs of such a colony.

[1] Although these prices were reduced when competition demanded it.

CHAPTER VII

EARLY PHASES OF THE OREGON QUESTION

At the conclusion of the War of 1812 the Columbia River region might have passed at once into the hands of Mr. Astor, for fur trading purposes, had it not been for a series of delays which gave the British company opportunity to establish itself firmly.

Astor continues to be interested in the Columbia. Mr. Astor in 1813 advised the government concerning the progress of his business on the Columbia and pointed out that if the government had granted him military support, even to a slight extent, Astoria could have been held against a British attack by sea. It was doubtless due to Mr. Astor's warnings that in March, 1814, the government instructed our peace commissioners to keep the Columbia fort in mind when discussing the terms of a treaty with Great Britain. In case that place had been captured during the war, and in case the commissioners could agree on a treaty clause restoring to each nation places and possessions taken by either party during the war, then the post at the mouth of the Columbia ought to be restored. Secretary of State Monroe in writing the instructions expressed the view that Britain had no right to any territory whatever on the Pacific coast, and he asserted roundly:

"On no pretext can the British Government set up a claim to territory south of the northern boundary of the United States." [1]

While the commissioners were carrying on their negotiations at Ghent, a gentleman who represented Mr. Astor was at hand eager to learn what would be done and finally what was done about the Columbia River fort. He stated that if its restoration was agreed upon, it was Mr. Astor's intention to reoccupy it at once and resume the trade.[2]

What the treaty stipulated. The treaty did not mention Astoria specifically, but it provided, in general terms, that: "All territory, places, and possessions whatsoever, taken by either party from the other during the war, . . . (should) be restored without delay. . . ." Mr. Astor seems to have thought that since his fort on the Columbia had been taken possession of by a British warship, the Northwest Company should now be compelled to give it up, without regard to the fact that, before the warship arrived, his partners had accepted from that company a sum of money in payment for the fort and its appurtenances.

Restoration of Astoria demanded. In July, 1815, six months after the signing of the treaty, Monroe as Secretary of State gave notice to the British govern-

[1] Am. State Papers, III, 731. Monroe was especially concerned for the safety of the Mississippi and the upper Louisiana territory, where earlier negotiations had failed to establish a definite boundary between American and British territory. He probably cared little for the Columbia region for its own sake.

[2] J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, XI.

ment that the United States expected to reoccupy the Columbia under the treaty, but two years elapsed before any definite step was taken. The delay may have been due to Mr. Astor, for it is almost certain that the government was merely trying to clear the way for his reoccupation of Astoria. But in September, 1817, the ship *Ontario,* Captain Biddle, was ordered to the Columbia to "assert the claim of the United States to the (Columbia) country in a friendly and peaceable manner. . . ."

British claims stated. When the British minister at Washington, Mr. Charles Bagot, learned about the orders given Captain Biddle he protested to J. Q. Adams, Secretary of State. Astoria was not one of the "places and possessions" referred to in the treaty, since the fort had been purchased by British subjects before the *Raccoon* entered the river. Nor was the Columbia valley "territory . . . taken . . . during the war"; it was rather a region "early taken possession of in His Majesty's name, and considered as forming part of His Majesty's dominions."[1] This was the formal opening of the Oregon Question, which required nearly a generation for its settlement, and at one time threatened to bring on a war.

The Northwest Company interested. It is interesting to find that, just as the American government was acting in these matters at the behest of Mr. Astor,

[1] It was claimed that Lieutenant Broughton took formal possession of the Columbia country when he entered the river in October, 1792.

so the British government was acting under the impulse supplied by the Northwest Company. That government, indeed, knew nothing about the situation at the mouth of the Columbia except what it learned from the Northwest Company partners, especially Simon McGillivray, who resided generally in London and had charge of the outfitting of the company's ships. It was McGillivray who learned in some way to us unknown that Captain Biddle of the *Ontario* had orders to sail to the Columbia and it was he who furnished Mr. Bagot that exciting piece of news; he also furnished Bagot the history of the British claim to the Columbia on which he based his protest to Mr. Adams.[1] We glean from McGillivray that the Northwest Company had planned in 1810 to take possession of the mouth of the Columbia but that they were delayed by government red tape until it was too late because Astor had forestalled them. When the war broke out, however, they persuaded the admiralty to send a warship to the Columbia to capture Astoria while the company sent the *Isaac Todd* to begin their establishment.

Excitement over the Ontario's mission. The sending of the *Ontario* created a decided sensation. The British minister wrote in some alarm to his government, and for the moment it looked as if a serious issue might be made of the incident. Lord Castlereagh,

[1] McGillivray's "Statement Relative to the Columbia River," etc. was found with Bagot's dispatch No. 74, Public Record Office, F. O. America 123. The McGillivray statement abounds in errors, but it was all that Bagot had to guide his course.

however, the British Foreign Secretary, found reasons of policy for conceding the right of the United States to be placed in possession of Astoria, under the treaty of Ghent, although he refused to concede the American right to the territory. He therefore offered to restore the post, and suggested that the question of title to the territory, together with other differences between the two countries, be submitted to arbitration.

Astoria formally restored. John Quincy Adams was quick to accept the offer of the restoration of Astoria, which was turned over by the Northwest Company to Mr. J. B. Prevost on the 6th of October, 1818. But Mr. Adams refused the offer of arbitration, believing that direct negotiation was a surer way of gaining American rights.

The joint occupation treaty. Two weeks after the formal restoration of Astoria, on October 20, 1818, representatives of the two nations signed at London a treaty in which the Oregon Question was mentioned but not settled. The questions at issue, besides the Columbia territory question, were the rights of Great Britain to navigate the Mississippi, and the northern boundary of Louisiana from the Lake of the Woods to the crest of the Rockies. Great Britain at last abandoned her claim to the Mississippi, and was therefore willing to permit the boundary to be extended westward on the forty-ninth parallel from the Lake of the Woods to the Rockies. But she refused to extend that line of boundary from the Rockies to the sea, as the United States suggested, which would have settled the Oregon

Question at one stroke. Instead the two governments agreed upon a clause which subjected the Oregon country to a "joint-occupation" for ten years by citizens and subjects of both nations. This meant simply that Americans and Englishmen had equal right to trade and settle in any part of the country, but that neither the one party nor the other could have absolute control over any part of it till the question of ownership, or of boundary, was settled.

Cession of Spanish rights to the United States. This treaty of joint occupation also professed to safeguard the rights of other nations. This was necessary, because at the time neither Spain nor Russia had formally yielded up their respective claims to territory in that region. But it so happened that J. Q. Adams at that moment was engaged in negotiating a treaty with Spain concerning Florida and he made use of his opportunity to gain an additional basis of title to the Columbia region. It had been proposed that Spain and the United States should agree on boundaries west of the Mississippi, defining the Louisiana purchase to the Rocky Mountains. In connection with that proposal, on October 31, 1818, only eleven days after the date of the treaty with Britain, Adams demanded that Spain agree to draw a boundary line also from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific. This was done, the forty-second parallel being taken, and each of the two contracting nations agreeing to abandon to the other all claims and pretensions they had to territory north and south of that line respectively.

Its importance. Adams regarded this as a great diplomatic triumph.[1] No doubt it had a certain importance. In the negotiation with Britain the American commissioners were somewhat at a loss to produce satisfactory arguments in support of their claim to the coast to the northward of the Columbia, however easy it was to maintain a claim to the valley of the river itself. Gray had discovered the river, Lewis and Clark explored from its fountains to the sea, and Mr. Astor took possession at its mouth, holding the territory firmly until the war compelled him to retire. But all of this gave no direct claim to territory outside the Columbia basin and we were asking for a boundary along the forty-ninth parallel to the sea.

The new American argument. After the treaty with Spain Americans could insist, as they did, that since the first exploration of the coast line, well up beyond the fiftieth parallel, had been made by Spain, whose rights we now held, and since the Columbia River, discovered, explored, and first occupied by Americans, had some of its sources in these high latitudes also, we were not merely within our rights in demanding the forty-ninth parallel boundary, but the offer of that line might be looked upon as a very generous concession to Great Britain.

Settlement with Russia. The Russian claim, which was based originally on the discoveries of Vitus Bering and Tchirikoff, on the occupation of Alaska by Russian fur traders, and on a grant of trade and settlement

[1] Adams's Memoirs, IV, 275.

privileges to the Russian American Fur Company chartered in 1799, was likewise indefinite and had at times a tendency to advance in a menacing manner. However, soon after the conclusion of the Florida treaty, the American government began negotiations with Russia and after some delays, in 1824, a treaty of limits was secured. By this instrument it was agreed that Russian subjects would not push their activities, in trade and settlement, below the line of the parallel of fifty-four degrees and forty minutes, and that American citizens should not operate to the north of that line. The next year a similar agreement was entered into between Great Britain and Russia, the boundary between the northern territories of the two nations being fixed at the same time.[1]

On many accounts it seems most unfortunate that Great Britain and the United States failed in 1818 to dispose of the Oregon Question by agreeing on the forty-ninth parallel. Had they done so, no other power would have entered to disturb the arrangement, and it would have saved the two interested nations a long and acrimonious contest. Possibly a more strenuous attitude on our part might have brought about a satisfactory solution. But our government was not prepared to act with vigour, and was unwilling also to risk a

[1] It was the treaty of 1825 between Russia and Great Britain which defined the boundary of Alaska on the land side, as it is today. Russia held the great peninsula west to the 141st meridian of longitude, and a coast strip thirty miles wide extending to latitude 54°40″.

failure to settle the Louisiana boundary for the sake of its claims on the Columbia.

Lack of interest in Oregon, except among Astor's connections; John Floyd's first report on Oregon. The truth is, that in 1818 very few Americans had the slightest interest in the region west of the Rocky Mountains. Bryant wrote of it, in 1817, as,—

> "The continuous woods
> Where rolls the Oregon and hears no sound
> Save his own dashings." [1]

So far as we know, those who had been directly or indirectly interested in the Astor enterprise were the only agitators for the adoption of an Oregon policy by the government. Some of the Astor partners, it appears, were in touch with Representative John Floyd of Virginia at Washington.[2] Possibly their accounts of Oregon aroused his interest in the country as a valuable future possession of the United States. At all events, on the 20th of December, 1820, Mr. Floyd brought the question forward for the first time in the Congress of the United States. He wished "to inquire into the situation of the settlements on the Pacific Ocean, and the expediency of occupying the Columbia River." One month later, Floyd, at the head of a committee of

[1] Because of the popularity of Bryant's "Thanatopsis" in which the lines occur, the name *Oregon* was brought prominently before the public. Bryant doubtless obtained it from Carver's Travels.

[2] See Bourne, E. G. Aspects of Oregon History Previous to 1840. *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, Vol. IV, p. 255.

Congress, made a report on the subject of our rights west of the Rockies.[1]

The first congressional debate on Oregon; Floyd's speech. It was many months before Floyd was able to get a hearing; but in 1822 he brought in another bill which aroused much interest in Congress and drew the attention of the country to the Oregon question. In the debate which occurred Floyd took the leading part. He was one of those men who have the power of looking beyond the present, and seeing in imagination the changes likely to occur in future years. Though he lived in Virginia, Floyd knew what was going on beyond the mountains, and was thrilled by the spectacle of America's wonderful growth, which he believed, rightly or wrongly, to be due largely to her free system of government. In the space of forty-three years, he said, Virginia's population had spread westward more than a thousand miles. He evidently believed it would not be long before Americans would reach the Rockies, and stand ready to descend into the Oregon country. This was a new thought, just beginning to take hold of the American people, and as yet quite startling to most men who, in spite of what

[1] This report, which is reprinted in the Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, VIII, 51-75, contains the first general discussion of Oregon and the Oregon Question from the American point of view. The bill for the creation of an Oregon Territory, which followed, fixed the name *Oregon* upon the country. Many things contained in the report cannot be accepted as impartial history, but the writer was more concerned with the future than with the past, and it certainly held the prophecy of great things.

had already been done, found it difficult to conceive of the American population expanding till it should reach the Pacific. But he only hinted at these things, knowing very well that most members of Congress would regard predictions of this kind as the merest folly.

Floyd's argument. Floyd's main argument had to do with the importance of the Columbia River to American commerce. Our people ought to have the benefit of the fur trade now going to British subjects; many whalers from New England annually visited the Oregon coast and needed some safe port in which to refit and take supplies; the trade with China would be greatly advanced by maintaining a colony on the Pacific. He tried to show that the Missouri and Columbia together would form a good highway for commerce across the continent, and that the entire distance between St. Louis and Astoria could be traversed with steamboat and wagon in the space of forty-four days.

Mr. Bailies's remarkable predictions. Other speakers also urged the commercial importance of a fort at the mouth of the Columbia. Mr. Bailies of Massachusetts declared that in all probability there would one day be a canal connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, which would be an added reason for maintaining a colony on the Pacific. Most persons feared that Americans going to this distant land would separate from us and set up a government for themselves; but Mr. Bailies pointed out that such a canal would bind them closely to us. Yet, if they should

form an independent American state on the Pacific, even this would be better than to have that region pass into the hands of foreigners, or be left a savage wilderness. "I would delight," said the speaker, "to know that in this desolate spot, where the prowling cannibal now lurks in the forest, hung round with human bones and with human scalps, the temples of justice and the temples of God were reared, and man made sensible of the beneficent intentions of his creator." The country, he said, had made marvellous progress within the memories of living men, and with the fervour of an ancient prophet he continued: "Some now within these walls may, before they die, witness scenes more wonderful than these; and in after times may cherish delightful recollections of this day, when America, almost shrinking from the 'shadows of coming events,' first placed her feet upon untrodden ground, scarcely daring to anticipate the greatness which awaited her."

The practical man's view of the Oregon question. To show how the hard-headed, practical men comprising the majority in Congress treated such idealists as Floyd and Bailies, we have only to turn to the opposition speech of Mr. Tracy of New York. He declared that there was no real demand for a fort and colony on the Columbia. No one had shown that it would benefit commerce. It was visionary to expect an overland commercial connection with the Pacific Ocean. Military posts ought not to be used to draw population far away into the wilderness, but merely to protect the frontier. Mr. Tracy had received accurate informa-

tion about the territory along the Columbia, from men who had visited that region, and was sure that its agricultural possibilities had been greatly overestimated. As a final agrument, he declared that the people on the Pacific and those on the Atlantic could never live under the same government. "Nature," said Mr. Tracy, "has fixed limits for our nation; she has kindly interposed as our western barrier mountains almost inaccessible, whose base she has skirted with irreclaimable deserts of sand." [1]

Defeat of Floyd's bill. On the 23d of January, 1823, after a long and vigorous debate, Floyd's bill came to a vote in the House of Representatives and was defeated, one hundred to sixty-one. The time had not yet come for an American colony on the Pacific, because the government was unwilling to plant such a settlement, and the people were not yet thinking of Oregon as a "pioneer's land of promise." Only a few men, and those of the rarer sort, looked forward to the occupation of the Columbia region as a step toward the establishment of a greater America, with a frontage on the Pacific Ocean similar to that which we then had upon the Atlantic.

Strangely enough none of the speakers in the House seemed to suspect that we might not have a right, under the treaty of joint occupation, to plant a military colony at the mouth of the Columbia, or that Great Britain

[1] From the time of Long's exploring expedition to the Rocky Mountains (1819), the western portion of the Great Plains was called the "Great American Desert."

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had an actual claim to the country which was protected by that treaty. Only one man appeared to understand the situation clearly, Senator Benton of Missouri. He believed that if the British remained in sole possession of Oregon till 1828, the year that the treaty of joint occupation was to expire, they would remain for a still longer period; and in a speech in the Senate he favoured an American colony on the Columbia as a means of maintaining our rights in the country.

Diplomatic negotiations resumed. We must now turn from Congress where Oregon bills were brought up almost every session, till the end of 1827, and see what was being done for Oregon elsewhere. In 1824, stimulated by the agitation in Congress, and taking advantage of the fact that other matters were pressing for settlement between Great Britain and the United States, our government sought a new diplomatic negotiation on the Oregon question.

The British government had carefully avoided the question since 1818. The reason doubtless was that since British traders were in monopolistic control of the fur trade of the Columbia, it was good policy to leave the boundary question in abeyance as long as possible, for so long as Americans failed to take advantage of their rights under the treaty of joint occupation the British claim was in no danger of becoming weaker.

Basis of the American claim. Mr. Adams, in instructing Richard Rush, American minister at London, to bring up the Oregon question, described the Ameri-

can claim "to the Columbia river and the interior territory washed by its waters," as resting (1) upon Gray's discovery and naming of the river; (2) Lewis and Clark's exploration; (3) the Astoria settlement, and the restoration of Astoria in 1818; (4) the acquisition of the Spanish title. Spain, he held, was the only European power who had any territorial rights on the northwest coast prior to the discovery of the river itself. The river was supposed to rise as far north as the fifty-first parallel, giving us a good right to territory up to that line. But, since the forty-ninth parallel had been already adopted to the Rockies, he was willing to extend that boundary west to the Pacific.

Canning's Oregon policy. At the time of the negotiation of 1824 the brilliant and not always amiable George Canning was British foreign secretary. Canning disliked Mr. Adams personally, and besides, for reasons of policy, he was in no mood to humour him in the Oregon matter. Accordingly, when he learned the extent of the American claims, Mr. Canning wrote the famous dispatch of May 31, 1824, to the British commissioners, which established the British Oregon policy for many years to come on a basis that made agreement with the United States impossible. Briefly stated, that policy was to claim (1) an equal right with the United States and all other powers to make use of the entire territory from 42° to 54°40′. This right was based on the fact that when Spain tried to exclude Britain from Nootka Sound in 1789–1790 Great Britain, at the risk of war, compelled Spain to recognize

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the equal right of her subjects to trade and make settlements in any part of the country north of California. (2) A willingness to agree on a division of the territory with the United States, then the only power aside from Britain which had real interests there, on "the joint principles of occupancy and reciprocal convenience." (3) Canning repelled the idea that Britain should give up the portion of the coast line containing Nootka Sound, since that place was the subject of dispute with Spain which led to the Nootka Convention of 1790, a great victory for British policy. (4) But he was still more determined not to give up the free use of the Columbia, "the only navigable communication, hitherto ascertained to exist, with the interior of that part of the country. The entrance to this river," he says, "was surveyed by British officers, at the expense of the British government, many years before any agents of the American government had visited its shores,[1] and the trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company are now and have for some time been stationed on its waters." (5) The Americans, Canning points out, are claiming under a French title, a Spanish title, and an American title, and they are supplying the deficiencies of each one of these titles by arguments drawn from the others. This could not be permitted. They might select the title they deemed best, and stand

[1] Canning did not recognize Gray, the discoverer of the river, as an agent of the American government, so Lewis and Clark would be the first of those agents, arriving thirteen years after Vancouver.

upon that, but must not attempt to use all three at the same time.

Results of the negotiations of 1824 and 1826. The result of Canning's attitude was, of course, the failure of the negotiations in 1824. Two years later Gallatin, our ablest and best known diplomatist, was sent to London to settle this question, with others. But the Canning policy stood athwart the path again and all the argumentation used, much of it able and vigorous, was in effect a mere process of marking time. Things must happen to change the general situation of the two countries relative to Oregon before a boundary could be fixed.

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CHAPTER VIII

PIONEERS OF THE PIONEERS

The West about 1820. In 1800 the region west of the Alleghenies had a population of about three hundred and twenty-five thousand. Twenty years later, when Mr. Floyd and a few others began to dream about expansion to the Pacific, the West already contained more than two million people, nearly one-tenth of whom (two hundred thousand) were living beyond the Mississippi. The country had entered upon a period of marvellous growth. Many thousands of emigrants were crossing the mountains each year, forests were levelled as if by a sort of magic, and a single season often saw great stretches of wild prairie transformed into fields of wheat and corn. In such pioneer states as Indiana and Illinois the wild game was rapidly disappearing from the river valleys as new settlers entered to make clearings and build homes. Many of the rude hamlets of twenty years before had given place to progressive and wealthy towns, thriving upon the business of the growing communities about them. Louisville, Cincinnati, New Orleans, and St. Louis had already become places of note, and controlled the commerce of the West much as New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore dominated the eastern section of the United

States. The western rivers were alive with noisy little steamboats, one of which had recently ascended the Missouri to the mouth of Platte River.[1] Roads were being opened everywhere, and the Erie Canal was under construction from the Hudson River to Lake Erie. The frontier of settlement was in the western part of Missouri, whence a trail had already been opened to Santa Fé, while others led far into the great plains toward the west and northwest.

The American fur trade of the far west.[2] Beyond the frontiers the trapper hunted the beaver streams, and the trader carried his tempting wares to the Indian villages, much as they had done twenty, fifty, or a hundred years before. Yet in some respects great changes had occurred in the western fur trade. From the time of Lewis and Clark's return and the opening of the Missouri River country, American traders had shown a strong disposition to organize for the better regulation of the business. The Missouri Fur Company, founded in 1808 for the purpose of controlling the trade of the Missouri River, was the pioneer of such associations in the United States, and it soon made St. Louis a great fur-trading centre.[3] But, while reasonably successful

[1] The *Western Engineer*, employed as part of Long's exploring equipment in 1819.

[2] Under the above title Captain H. M. Chittenden has recently given us a remarkably complete, accurate, and interesting history of the fur trade throughout the great region west of the Mississippi. His book, which cost years of patient research, was published in 1902 (3 vols.).

[3] Astor tried to combine with this company, but was unable to do so.

elsewhere, this company did not succeed after all in gaining commercial possession of the upper Missouri, because of the Blackfoot Indians who were persistently hostile. In 1822 a new company was organized at St. Louis by General William H. Ashley, whose plan in the beginning was to establish trading posts at favourable points on the upper Missouri, like the mouth of the Yellowstone, and keep agents in the country. The Blackfeet, however, could not be pacified, and this method had to be given up. Ashley then adopted the policy of sending bands of trappers to form camps in the best beaver districts, and trap out the streams one after another.

American trappers cross the Rockies. Under leaders like David Jackson and William L. Sublette, these parties not only gathered the fur harvest of some of the Missouri fields, but traversed the country for great distances to the southwest, far into the Rocky Mountains. Finally they entered the region tributary to the Columbia, and came into competition with the traders and trappers of the Hudson's Bay Company.[1] It was the clashing of skirmishers. Behind the one party was a powerful commercial organ-

[1] Several instances are recorded of American trapping companies getting the advantage of British parties in some way and securing their furs. In 1825 General Ashley got possession, for a trifling sum, of about seventy-five thousand dollars' worth of Hudson's Bay furs. We do not know exactly how these peculiar feats of wilderness commerce were performed, though it is pretty certain that the free use of whisky upon opposition trappers was one of the means employed.

eral Ashley turned over his business to J
Smith, David Jackson, and William L. Subl
first of these (Smith) immediately set out
Rocky Mountain camp and with a few men c
desert and mountains to California, arrivi
Diego in October, 1826. He remained in t
during the winter, and the following summe
to Salt Lake. In spite of severe sufferings c
trip, Smith went back to California the sar
losing most of his men at the hands of the M
dians. In California he got together a new
in 1828 crossed the mountains northward t
On the Umpqua River his company was attac
Indians and all except the leader and three o
killed. Smith also lost his entire catch of
horses, and other property, so that when he
Fort Vancouver (August, 1828) he was in
straits. Dr. McLoughlin received him kir
plied all his needs, and even sent men to the U
recover the furs stolen by the savages. Nearl
secured, and these McLoughlin purchased at t



The Rocky Mountains as seen from the east; the ascent is very gradual



to Clark's Fork, and then to the rendezvous of his company in the Rocky Mountains, having gained the distinction of making the first overland trip from the United States into California, and also the first from California to Oregon.

Wagons cross South Pass; Captain Bonneville. The next spring (1830) Smith, Jackson, and Sublette took the first loaded wagons into the Rocky Mountains to the head of Wind River, having driven from the Missouri along the line of the Platte and the Sweetwater. The partners reported that they could easily have crossed the mountains by way of South Pass. The discovery of this natural highway, so important in the history of the entire Pacific coast, must be credited to Ashley's trappers, some of whom first made use of it in 1823. Three years later a mounted cannon was taken to Salt Lake by this route, and six years after that loaded wagons crossed over for the first time to the west flowing waters. These vehicles belonged to the train of Captain Bonneville, a Frenchman in the United States army, who turned fur trader in 1832, hoping to gain a fortune like General Ashley. The story of his romantic marches and long detours through the great western wilderness has been charmingly told by Irving in his "Adventures of Captain Bonneville." In the space of about three years he traversed a large portion of the Snake River valley, and went down the Columbia as far as Fort Walla Walla.[1] But the gal-

[1] A few of his men, under Joseph Walker, went to California in 1833-1834. Some of them remained there as settlers.

lant captain was no match for the shrewd American traders, or for the well-organized British company controlling the Columbia River region, and therefore his venture turned out a complete failure.

Wyeth's trading scheme; the first trip to Oregon. In the same year that Bonneville set out for the West an enterprising Bostonian, Captain Nathaniel J. Wyeth, also entered the Oregon country for the purpose of trade. Wyeth had become familiar with the writings of Hall J. Kelley concerning Oregon,[1] and in the summer of 1831 he arranged to send a ship around Cape Horn while he, with a party of landsmen, was to proceed across the country hoping to meet the vessel near the mouth of the Columbia. A company of Boston merchants furnished the vessel, which sailed in the fall of 1831. Wyeth gathered a small party of men, formed a sort of "Wild West" camp on an island in Boston Harbour, greatly to the astonishment of most people, and in spring was ready to begin the overland march. Knowing that the trip would have to be made partly by land and partly by water, the ingenious Yankee invented a machine which could be used either as a wagon bed or a boat. This the Latin scholars at Harvard College named the "Nat Wyethium." He found it less useful than at first supposed and left it at St. Louis. At that place Wyeth and his men joined a party of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company under William L. Sublette, with whom

[1] Kelley published a plan for the colonization of Oregon, and other tracts.

they made the trip to the Rocky Mountains by means of a pack train. Here some of the men turned back discouraged, so that the last portion of the trip was made with only eleven men. This little party reached Vancouver, October 24, 1832. The ship had not arrived, and they soon learned that she had been wrecked at the Society Islands. Wyeth therefore returned to Boston in 1833, leaving a few of his men, who were among the first agricultural settlers of Oregon. The business part of the enterprise had failed completely.

Wyeth's second expedition. But Wyeth was plucky, and had great faith in the prospects for a profitable commercial enterprise in the Oregon country. The salmon fishery of the Columbia was a possible source of great wealth, and he proposed to couple fur trading with it. He therefore induced the Boston partners to supply another ship, the *May Dacre,* which was sent down the coast in the fall of 1833. Wyeth himself made the trip overland once more in the summer of 1834. This time he took a number of wagons from St. Louis, with goods which had been ordered by the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. When the company refused to receive them, Wyeth selected a place near the junction of the Snake and Portneuf rivers, where he built Fort Hall and began trading with the Indians on his own account by means of an agent left there. He then passed on down the river, reaching Vancouver in September. Once more the energetic captain was disappointed, for the *May*

Dacre, which had been expected to reach the Columbia early in the summer, during the salmon fishing season, came in tardily the day after the land party arrived. Nothing could then be done about fishing, so Wyeth sent her to the Hawaiian Islands with a cargo of timber, while he spent the winter in trapping beaver on the streams south of the Columbia, principally the Des Chutes. By the middle of February he was back at Vancouver, the guest of McLoughlin. His trading plans were now all ruined. Nothing could be done with the fur trade in opposition to the Hudson's Bay Company. His trading establishment at Fort Hall did not prosper, the fisheries and other commerce amounted to little. Wyeth lingered in the country till the summer of 1836, when he returned to Boston and soon closed out his business in Oregon.[1]

But there was also another motive, very different from the motive of the fur trader, which was drawing men into the great western wilds and on toward the Pacific Ocean. This was the desire on the part of

[1] Wyeth kept a regular journal, which has been preserved in the family of one of his descendants. This manuscript was sent from Massachusetts to Oregon and published (1899), together with a large number of Wyeth's letters, under the editorial direction of Professor F. G. Young, secretary of the Oregon Historical Society. The volume forms an invaluable source for the study of conditions in Oregon, and the state of the western fur trade, during the years covered. A very rare book on the first part of the first Wyeth expedition is the little volume by John B. Wyeth, published at Boston in 1833. Only a few copies are now in existence. It has been reprinted under the editorship of Reuben Gold Thwaites, LL.D. in his series *Early Western Travels.*

many good men to do something for the improvement of the Indians. There was nothing new in this any more than in the fur trade; but in the one case as in the other the period we have now reached witnesses a great expansion of effort and a marked improvement in organization.

A new interest in Indian missions. The government of the United States at first had taken little interest in direct plans for the elevation of the red race. But after the close of the War of 1812 which had caused a violent disturbance and dislocation in the condition of great numbers of Indians alike in the Northwest and in the Southwest, some changes were wrought in the government's policy. Missionaries had long urged the expenditure of money by the United States for the civilizing of the Indians. A bill for that purpose finally was passed which appropriated $10,000, and it was provided that the expenditure of these funds should be made through the several missionary societies that were maintaining workers among the Indians.

Morse's report on Indians. The sum was a small one, but it placed the work of the missions on a new basis, and it stimulated powerfully the missionary activity. Reverend Jedediah Morse, sent out on a missionary survey of the western tribes in 1820, prepared an elaborate report, printed by the government, in which he proposed the establishment of "Education Families" among the more promising tribes. By this he meant that several workers should co-operate in

the civilizing of the Indians — for example, the school teacher, the preacher, the Indian agent, the farmer, and the blacksmith. Such a group of workers might hope to develop among the Indians new tendencies and habits of life which would make the religious teaching fruitful instead of being, as was too often the case, a scattering of wheat seed in a field infested with tares. Morse also suggested the ultimate creation of an Indian State to include parts of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Some leaders, like the famous Baptist missionary, Rev. Isaac McCoy, had already introduced in their mission fields the ideas set forth by Morse, and with the government funds available for the payment of the school teacher, who was often the missionary preacher himself, the blacksmith and the farmer, or at least one or two of these, much more could be done than simple religious charity could hope to undertake. For, as yet, the bulk of even the Christian people of America were averse to giving their money for the benefit of the Indians, so sceptical were they of the Indians' capability of improvement.

The removal policy; eastern Indians sent westward. Coupled with the new government policy of aiding in civilizing the Indians, was the policy of removing the tribes which had dwelt in districts east of the Mississippi to the "illimitable" regions west of that river. This plan was adopted mainly because white people were anxious to get control of Indian lands for new settlements. But many missionaries favoured the removal policy on other grounds: they

believed that Indians could never be civilized if they lived in close proximity to whites, because the degrading influences, especially the sale to Indians of strong drink, which resulted from such proximity, would more than offset all that preachers, teachers, and others could do for them.

The practical carrying out of the removal policy caused great distress among the Indians, as may be supposed, and it likewise produced a mighty wave of sympathy for the red men. The newspapers recited their sufferings, and quoted the pathetic speeches of Indian chiefs, forced to leave "the land of their fathers, where the Indian fires were going out." Missionaries followed, without hesitation, to the strange lands where "new fires were lighting in the West," and soon a considerable number of devoted men were at work among the tribes living between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains. Some were labouring among peoples they had known east of the river; some sought out new fields on the Missouri, the Kansas, the Platte, and other streams, where they preached, taught the Indian children to read, and often induced the natives to till the soil and live in permanent houses, instead of wandering about in pursuit of game. Sometimes the government employed the missionaries as teachers or Indian agents, and often assisted them by providing a blacksmith to make tools and farming implements.

The Indian delegation to St. Louis. Since these things were going on in many places throughout the

West, and since a few persons like Hall J. Kelley had already been writing about the Oregon Indians in connection with plans for settling that country, it is not strange, but perfectly natural, that men should at last undertake to Christianize the tribes living on the Pacific coast. An incident which occurred probably in 1831 was sufficient to start the first missionaries across the mountains. As the story goes, the nations of the upper Columbia had learned from British traders something about the white man's religion. Wishing to know more, the Nez Percés, or Nez Percés and Flatheads, sent four of their leading men to St. Louis to see General Clark, whom old men remembered as having once visited their country, either to inquire about "The Book of Heaven," as the Protestants maintain, or to ask for priests, as the Catholics say. These Indians, setting out on their strange and interesting mission, crossed the mountains and the plains in safety and reached St. Louis, where they were kindly received by General Clark. Two of them died while in the city. The remaining two started for their own country in spring, but one died before reaching the mountains.

Beginnings of the Willamette mission. The story of these four Indians, and their long journey to the East in search of spiritual guidance, was soon published in the religious papers and created the keenest interest. First to respond to the call for teachers was the Methodist denomination, which in 1833 commissioned Rev. Jason Lee to begin work among the Flat-

heads.[1] Learning of Wyeth's plan to return to Oregon in the spring, Lee arranged to have all the provisions and equipments for the new mission taken to the Columbia in the *May Dacre,* while he and his nephew, Daniel Lee, and three laymen, Cyrus Shepard, P. L. Edwards, and C. M. Walker, joined Wyeth's overland party and made their way to the Columbia. They decided, for various reasons, to let the Flatheads wait and to begin work among the Indians on the Willamette. All went down to Vancouver, arriving in the month of September, 1834. When the *May Dacre* came in with their supplies, the missionaries explored the country for a suitable site. "On the east side of the river [Willamette], and sixty miles from its mouth, a location was chosen to begin a mission. Here was a broad, rich bottom, many miles in length, well watered and supplied with timber, oak, fir, cottonwood, white maple, and white oak, scattered along its grassy plains."[2] They immediately began preparing materials for a house and when the rains of winter came had a respectable shelter. At the same time land was fenced for cropping, a barn built, and other improvements made; so that the establishment took on the appearance of a prosperons woodland farm.

The first Oregon colony. The missionaries were

[1] The Indians who went to St. Louis were often spoken of as Flatheads but there is evidence that some of the delegates were in reality Nez Percés.

[2] Lee and Frost's "The First Ten Years of Oregon," reprinted by the *Oregonian,* Sunday edition, October 11 to January 10, 1903-1904.

not the only settlers in the Willamette valley. On arriving there they found about a dozen white men already occupying little farms, scattered along the river, where they lived in log cabins with Indian wives and families of children. Most of them were former servants of the Hudson's Bay Company who had either become unfit to range the forest, or preferred to settle down to cultivate the soil and live a quiet life. Dr. McLoughlin furnished them stock and provisions, as he did the men left in the country by Wyeth, receiving his pay in wheat when the crops were harvested, and in young stock to take the place of full-grown animals which he supplied. Here was the beginning of the first agricultural colony in Oregon, and it was this mixed community into which the missionaries now came as a new influence, tending to bring about better social conditions.

Progress of the mission. From the first, the missionaries were more successful in their efforts among the neighbouring settlers than with the surrounding Indians. They opened a school, maintained religious services, and soon organized a temperance society which, partly through Dr. McLoughlin's influence, many of the white men joined. The Indian children were admitted to their school, and some of them made fair progress in learning. Orphans were adopted into the mission family from time to time, receiving in this way greater benefits from their contact with civilization. In 1837 the mission was reinforced by the arrival of twenty assistants sent from the East in

two vessels.[1] New efforts were now made to Christianize the Indians of the Willamette, and the following year a branch mission was begun at the Dalles of the Columbia. This became an important station; but the work in the valley did not flourish, for the natives were a sickly, degraded race, almost beyond the reach of aid, and were rapidly dying off.

Parker's tour. Let us now see what was going on in other portions of the Oregon country. The story of the Nez Percés delegation to St. Louis had affected other denominations as well as the Methodists, and in 1835 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions sent out Dr. Samuel Parker to inquire into the prospects for missionary work among the Oregon Indians. Mr. Parker was accompanied by a pious young physician, Dr. Marcus Whitman. Together they made the overland trip from Liberty, Missouri, with a party of Rocky Mountain trappers. Arriving at Pierre's Hole, they found Indians of several Columbia River tribes, who all seemed anxious to have missionaries settle among them. Thinking, therefore, that the main point was now gained, Dr.

[1] The first party arrived in May, and contained Dr. and Mrs. Elijah White, with two children; Mr. Alanson Beers, his wife and three children; three young women, Miss Pitman, who was soon married to Rev. Jason Lee and who died the following year, Miss Susan Downing, who married Mr. Shepard, and Miss Elvira Johnson; and one unmarried man, Mr. W. H. Wilson. The second company, arriving in September, consisted of seven persons: Rev. David Leslie, wife and three children, Miss Margaret J. Smith, and Mr. H. K. W. Perkins.

Whitman returned to the East to bring out assistants and supplies to begin one or more missions. Dr. Parker went on, under Indian guidance, to the Columbia, arriving at Fort Vancouver on the 16th of October. Here he spent the winter as the guest of Dr. McLoughlin, and when spring came set out for the upper country. He stopped at Fort Walla Walla, where he preached to a multitude of Indians. Then journeying up the valley of Walla Walla River he observed, some twenty miles from the Columbia, "a delightful situation for a missionary establishment. . . . A mission located on this fertile field," he says, "would draw around [it] an interesting settlement, who would fix down to cultivate the soil and to be instructed. How easily might the plough go through these vallies, and what rich and abundant harvests might be gathered by the hand of industry." From this place he went up the Snake River, where he seems to have fixed upon another site for a mission, and then struck off northward, exploring the beautiful valley of Spokane River. Here, too, were many Indians, who appeared to be anxious for religious instruction. Later in the year (1836) Dr. Parker sailed from Vancouver for the Hawaiian Islands, whence he returned to the Atlantic coast by way of Cape Horn, reaching his home at Ithaca, New York, in May, 1837, after an absence of more than two years.[1]

[1] The following year Dr. Parker published at Ithaca, N. Y., his interesting little book called "An Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains."

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The Whitman party of missionaries; first women to go overland to Oregon. When Dr. Whitman returned to New York in the fall of 1835, with a report that the Columbia River Indians were eager for teachers, the board at once commissioned him to superintend the planting of a mission in that country. He had some trouble to find helpers, but at last Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Spalding consented to go with Whitman and his newly married wife. Mr. W. H. Gray also joined the party. These two women proved their exceptional courage by undertaking the overland trip, which thus far had been accomplished by none but men. At Liberty, Missouri, the missionaries joined a company of fur traders, and travelled with them to the mountains. In addition to saddle horses and pack animals, Whitman had provided his party with a one-horse wagon. At that time there was no road beyond Fort Hall, but on account of Mrs. Spalding's feeble health, which made it impossible for her to keep the saddle, he drove this vehicle as far as Fort Boise on Snake River, thus opening a new stage in the wagon road to the Columbia.

Beginnings of the interior missions. Arriving at Fort Vancouver in September, the women were left under the protection of Dr. McLoughlin's family, while the men went up the river to begin the missions. On the Walla Walla River, about twenty miles above the fort, was a place which the Indians called Waiilatpu, where the first establishment was begun. In this prairie country timber was very scarce, and



of corn and one acre of potatoes, besides peas and barley. A few cattle were early procured from the East, and these multiplying rapidly, and being added to from time to time, soon developed into considerable herds, of which the Indians secured a share. In the fall of 1838 a small party came from the East overland to reinforce the up-river missions. It consisted of Rev. Cushing Eells and wife, Rev. Elkanah Walker and wife, Rev. A. B. Smith and wife, Mr. W. H. Gray and wife, and Mr. C. Rogers.[1] Now it was determined to occupy the northernmost of the three mission fields selected by Dr. Parker, the Spokane country, where the families of Walker and Eells established themselves in the spring of 1839.[2]

Life at the interior missions. Thus some of the tribes of the interior country were at last brought under the influence of a few men and women wholly devoted to their welfare, and understanding with a fair degree of clearness how to guide these barbarians along the path of civilization. The task was stupendous; but the missionaries believed it was not impossible, and laboured with exemplary courage. They preached to the natives as regularly as possible, gathered the children and their elders in the schools, translated portions of the Bible into the Indian language

[1] Gray, who came to the Columbia in 1836 with Whitman and Spalding, had gone back to secure help, and was married before returning.

[2] This place was known as Tsimakane. For a short time a station was also occupied at Kamiah, on Snake River.

and printed them on a little press, the gift of the Hawaiian missionaries; they helped the Indians build houses for themselves, showed them how to till their fields and lead water upon the growing crops; they erected rude mills to grind their corn and wheat.

Coming of the Catholics. The earliest missions were founded, as we saw, by the Methodist society, and the next group by the American Board, both of those religious groups having been influenced by the story of the Flathead, or Nez Percés, or mixed delegation to St. Louis in 1831 in search of religious guidance. Yet, there is reason to believe that those Indians, who in their country had received the religious impulse which aroused their astonishing zeal, or curiosity, as one may view it, from Iroquois Indians Christianized in the Red River settlement, were really asking for black-robed priests like those of whom the Iroquois told them. If so, they were momentarily disappointed, but their people persisted and ultimately the "black robes" came to them. However, the first Catholic missionaries came to western Oregon, not to the land of the Flatheads or Nez Percés. It was in the year 1838 that Father Blanchet of the Montreal diocese and Father Demers of Red River began their labours among Catholic settlers and Indians under the protection and with the active support of the Hudson's Bay Company.

The Catholic missions. The first mission was established on the Cowlitz. Afterwards, St. Paul on the Willamette became the mission capital and the resi-

dence of Father Blanchet, Vicar General and finally Bishop. Though the Catholic settlers on the Cowlitz and the Willamette were the first care of the two fathers, they travelled widely in the Oregon country and carried their teachings to various Indian tribes, among them the Walla Walla and Cayuse Indians living near the Whitman Mission.

The Catholic ladder. Father Blanchet invented, for this work among the red men, the famous "Catholic Ladder," a pictorial representation of world history from the standpoint of Christianity. This device was very effective in its appeal to the primitive mind, and it was one of the reasons for the marked success of the Catholic teachers as contrasted with that of their Protestant rivals. In the end, the Protestants were induced to use a "ladder" also, the invention of Mrs. Spalding, wife of Rev. H. H. Spalding, one of the Whitman missionaries.

Father DeSmet. The most noteworthy of the Catholic missionaries in Oregon, during the early period, was the Jesuit Father DeSmet of St. Louis. DeSmet made his first journey west of the Rockies in 1840, answering what is said to have been the third appeal of the Flathead Indians who in 1839 sent Ignace, a Christian Iroquois who lived among them, to St. Louis to ask for a missionary. The work of DeSmet during several successive journeys covered the northeastern portion of the old Oregon country and resulted in the establishment of such permanently important missions as those in the Bitter Root valley

and at Coeur d'Alene. But others who followed and supported him carried the work throughout most of the interior country.

Religious rivalries. Two widely variant types of Christianity were thus presented to the Indians of the Northwest by men who in each case conceived his own form to be the only means of salvation. It is not strange that the Indians were puzzled, or that vengeful feelings should occasionally cause those of one faith to injure the teachers of the other. So general was the impression of hostility among the rival groups of religionists that when the Whitman massacre occurred, in November, 1847, the adherents of the Protestant cause were impelled to lay the blame for the awful crime upon the Catholics who, they believed, had incited the Indians to murder the Protestant missionaries. This charge, in support of which no real evidence has ever been produced, springs naturally out of the religious rancour of the time.

CHAPTER IX

THE COLONIZING MOVEMENT

Ten years of official inactivity, 1827–1837. The United States government, in all its departments, dropped the Oregon question when Gallatin secured the second treaty of joint occupation. For nearly ten years after that date neither Congress nor the executive made any move of importance toward settling the dispute with England, or assisting American citizens to gain a foothold within the Oregon country. Yet this period, 1827–1837, is of great importance in the history of Oregon because of the doings of the first pioneers as described in the preceding chapter. Trappers, traders, and missionaries had entered the region; and while little impression was made upon the business of the Hudson's Bay Company, a few Americans remained to till the soil and to instruct the Indians in religious things. This created a bond between the United States and the distant Columbia which forced the government to take an interest in that country. The question of the future of Texas had also compelled the United States to concern itself about the Mexican territories, and at one time (1835) President Jackson was anxious to buy northern California in order to secure the fine harbour of San Francisco. Accord-

ingly, he sent an agent, Mr. W. A. Slocum, to the Pacific to collect information for the government, and on this voyage the first official visit was paid to Oregon.

Slocum's visit to Oregon. Slocum arrived in the Columbia River at the end of the year 1836, with particular instructions from President Jackson to govern his doings there. He was to visit all the white settlements on and near the Columbia, as well as the various Indian villages; to make a complete census of both whites and Indians, and to learn what the white people thought about the question of American rights in Oregon. Briefly, he was to "obtain all such information . . . as [might] prove interesting or useful to the United States." Mr. Slocum performed his work with a good deal of thoroughness. He made charts of the Columbia River, locating all the principal Indian villages; visited Fort Vancouver to learn about the fur trade and other business of the establishment; and went up the Willamette Valley to the Methodist mission, calling at nearly every settler's cabin passed on the way. He was pleased with the country, found the missionaries doing good work among the French and other settlers, and became enthusiastic over the agricultural advantages of the Willamette Valley. He pronounced it "the finest grazing country in the world. Here there are no droughts," he says, "as on the Pampas of Buenos Ayres or the plains of California, whilst the lands abound with richer grasses both winter and summer."

The Willamette Cattle Company, 1837. Mr.

Slocum believed that if the settlers could be better provided with cattle, which were as yet comparatively scarce, the prosperity of the country would be assured; and with this idea the Oregon people heartily agreed. The Hudson's Bay Company, while generous in providing farmers with work oxen, were not prepared to sell breeding stock freely, because their herds were not yet large enough to more than supply their own needs. The only practical way to obtain more cattle was to bring them overland from California, where the Mexican ranchers were slaughtering many thousands each year for the sake of the hides and tallow which they sold mainly to Boston shipowners.[1] There was one settler in the Willamette valley who was familiar with California, having lived there several years before coming to Oregon. This was Ewing Young, a man of considerable talent and enterprise, who now headed a movement for bringing cattle from the South.[2] Slocum encouraged the project in every way, especially

[1] One of the most entertaining books on early California is Richard H. Dana's classic story, "Two Years Before the Mast." It gives an account of the author's experience while a sailor on one of the "hide and tallow" ships trading along the California coast.

[2] Young was a noted frontiersman, originally from Tennessee, who early began trading in New Mexico. From there he went to California in 1829 and came to Oregon overland with a few others in 1834, driving a band of horses. One of his companions on this trip was the famous Oregon agitator, Hall J. Kelley, of Boston. Kelley had expected to bring out a colony to Oregon in 1832; but failing to secure colonists he finally started on his own account going to Mexico, thence to California and finally with Young to Oregon.

by offering to carry to California without expense the men who were to go for the purpose of securing cattle. An association was formed, with Young at its head, that took the name of the "Willamette Cattle Company." A fund of several thousand dollars was subscribed, partly by Dr. McLoughlin for the fur company, partly by the Methodist mission, and the remainder by individuals. Mr. Slocum himself took a small financial interest in the company. Ewing Young and P. L. Edwards, with a few others, took passage in the *Loriot* (Slocum's ship) to California, where they bought eight hundred head of cattle at three dollars apiece, and forty horses at twelve dollars apiece. After many vexations and hardships they arrived in the Willamette valley with six hundred head of stock, the remainder having been lost by the way.

The bringing of these cattle, in the fall of 1837, marks the opening of a new era for Oregon. It gave a great stimulus to stock raising, for which the country was specially adapted, promoted the prosperity of the settlers already there, and, by the reports which soon travelled eastward, caused many people in the Mississippi valley to look with longing eyes toward this land of ease and plenty, thus preparing the way for the colonizing movement which was about to begin.

Renewal of Oregon agitation in Congress. Mr. Slocum returned to the United States and made his report to the government. In December, 1837, this document, so interesting as the earliest particular account of the Willamette settlement, was presented to

Congress and immediately aroused great interest. One of the points which Slocum insisted upon was that the United States must never accept a northern boundary for Oregon that would give to the British government the great harbour of Puget Sound. In other words, his idea was that we should hold out sturdily for the 49th parallel, already thrice offered, and refuse utterly to take Great Britain's offer of the Columbia boundary. This doubtless strengthened the determination of a few leaders in Congress to secure a law for the military occupation of the Columbia, similar to that which Mr. Floyd tried to obtain fifteen years earlier. The Oregon question now came up once more and remained before Congress, in some form, during the succeeding ten years, till Oregon was effectively settled by the pioneers, a favourable treaty obtained from Great Britain, and an American territory created on the Pacific coast.

Linn's bill and report, January and June, 1838. Of the many men who took part in the Oregon discussions, between the years 1837 and 1843, none was more active or determined than Dr. Lewis F. Linn, senator from Missouri. He believed thoroughly in American rights on the Pacific, was inclined to belittle the British claims, and insisted on the urgent necessity of taking military possession of the Columbia River. He proposed also to establish a territorial government for Oregon. His first bill for these purposes was presented to the Senate in January, 1838, and in June Dr. Linn brought in a report on the Oregon question. This was a lengthy document, containing a history of

the events on which our right to the Oregon country rested, and trying to show that the British claim was not well founded. In these respects it differed little from the earlier report by Floyd; yet on many points Linn was able to give information never before presented to the country. For example, he described the road to Oregon, which had recently been traversed by two women in the Whitman-Spalding party. Many brief documents containing valuable information were printed as appendices to the report, which thus became a sort of text-book for the study of the Oregon question. Thousands of copies were printed, and in the next few years they were distributed all over the country, especially through the West, with the result that numbers of men soon became interested in "our territory on the Pacific," as Oregon was frequently called.[1]

Jason Lee's return; the Farnham party. Other influences were working to the same effect. Jason Lee, the superintendent of the Willamette mission, returned to the United States in the summer of 1838 "to obtain additional facilities to carry on . . . the missionary work in Oregon territory." He travelled overland with a few companions, passing through the frontier settlements of Missouri and Illinois, where he accepted invitations to lecture and to preach in the churches. A principal aim was to raise money for his missionary enterprise, but incidentally Lee aroused a good deal of enthusiasm for the far-off country, so rich in natural

[1] When the pioneers began to go to Oregon copies of Linn's Report were among the very few books taken across the plains.

resources, where he had lived during the preceding four years, almost within sight of the Pacific Ocean. At Peoria, Illinois, he left one of two Indian boys who had gone east with him, and perhaps partly on that account a special interest was aroused at that place. In the following spring Mr. Thomas J. Farnham of Peoria, with a company of fourteen men, undertook the overland trip to Oregon. He failed to keep his party together, and finished the journey with but three associates. Farnham visited the Whitman mission, and later the Willamette settlement, after which he took ship to the Hawaiian Islands and to California. On his return to the United States he published popular accounts of the Oregon country, as well as of California, which were widely read and helped to swell the rising tide of interest in the far west.

Petitions and memorials. The settlers in the Willamette valley intrusted Farnham with a memorial to Congress, asking that the protection of the United States government might be extended over them. Lee had carried with him from Oregon a similar petition, which was presented to Congress in January, 1839, by Senator Linn. It spoke of the fertility of the Willamette and Umpqua valleys, the unsurpassed facilities for stock raising, the mild and pleasant climate of western Oregon, and the exceptional opportunities for commerce. A special point was made of the growing trade with the Hawaiian Islands, whose people needed the beef and flour produced in the Willamette valley, and would soon be able to exchange for them coffee, sugar,

and other tropical products required by the Oregon settlers. "We flatter ourselves," say the thirty-six signers of the memorial, "that we are the germ of a great state. . . . The country must populate. The Congress of the United States must say by whom. The natural resources of the country, with a well-judged civil code, will invite a good community. But a good community will hardly emigrate to a country which promises no protection to life or property. . . ." Lee personally wrote a letter to Congressman Caleb Cushing of Massachusetts, in which he reinforced the statements made in the petition.[1] "It may be thought," he says, "that Oregon is of little importance; but depend upon it, sir, there is the germ of a great state." The Oregon people desired from Congress two things: first, the protection of the laws of the United States; second, a guarantee that they might keep the lands already taken up by them. Linn, Cushing, and other men made a faithful effort to obtain such laws; but the prevailing sentiment was against them, and no bill passed either house of Congress till 1843.[2]

The Oregon Provisional Emigration Society; its

[1] Cushing made a report to the House of Representatives in 1839 which in some respects supplemented the report made by Linn to the Senate the year before.

[2] It was indeed, a very difficult matter to draw up a bill for the extension of our national authority over Oregon without violating either the letter or the spirit of the treaty of joint occupation. Many members of Congress refused to support the bills presented by Linn and others because it was feared their passage might embroil us with Great Britain.

origin and purpose. We have now to describe a movement arising outside of Congress in the summer of 1838, which added largely to the effect of the agitation begun by Linn and Cushing. This was the so-called Oregon Provisional Emigration Society, organized at Lynn, Massachusetts, in August, 1838. The society was not a missionary organization purely, though most of its leading members belonged to the Methodist denomination. Its aim was "to prepare the way for the Christian settlement of Oregon." It proposed to enlist several hundred Christian families, send them to Oregon overland, and encourage them to make use of all the advantages for stock raising, commerce, fishing, etc., that the country afforded. But this was not to be the only aim of the settlement, for which the founders of the society had "nobler purposes in view." They believed it might be possible to Christianize the Indians, educate them, and make them citizens of a new commonwealth in which they were to have all the rights and privileges of white citizens. The theory was that while the Indians east of the Rockies had already become hopelessly degraded, through contact with white men, those in the Oregon country were still mainly sound, and if taken in time might be saved.

The Oregonian. The society published a monthly magazine called at first *The Oregonian.* The phrase *and Indian's Advocate* was afterward added to the title. It was edited by Rev. Frederick P. Tracy, of Lynn, Massachusetts, who was also the secretary of

the society. In the numbers of this magazine we find a large amount of information concerning the Oregon of eighty years ago.[1] The editor grew eloquent in the effort to set before his readers the possibilities of this great country. He called it "the future home of the power which is to rule the Pacific, . . . the theatre on which mankind are to act out a part not yet performed in the drama of life and government." Oregon's "far-spreading seas and mighty rivers [were] to teem with the commerce of an empire"; her "boundless prairies and verdant vales [were] to feel the steps of civilized millions; . . ."

Colonizing plan fails. Such enthusiasm, supported by much valuable information, must have produced considerable effect, since the magazine reached a circulation of nearly eight hundred copies, and in addition to this the society also sent an agent into the western states to enlist emigrants, who were to go to Oregon in the spring of 1840. This scheme of colonization failed. Since the magazine suspended publication in the year 1839, we do not have the society's explanation of the failure. But probably they found impracticable the plan of enlisting well to do persons in a scheme of colonization which was more or less missionary in its aims, particularly since they proposed to secure the political and social equality of the Indians. In a word, the plan was too visionary to succeed.

[1] Apparently only eleven numbers were printed. It begins with October, 1838, and ends with August, 1839. Complete files of this paper are very rare.

But by this time there were little knots of men in various parts of the United States,— Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri,— who thought of forming emigration societies to colonize Oregon. There was some delay in carrying out these plans; but the idea had begun to take hold of the popular mind, and a few years would see the wagon trains gathering for the wonderful journey across the continent.

Lee's missionary colonization scheme. We left Jason Lee busily at work in the eastern states raising money and men for his missionary reinforcement. He was remarkably successful, securing, with the help of the Methodist board, the large sum of forty-two thousand dollars. He got together a company of over fifty persons — men, women, and children — with whom he sailed from New York in the ship *Lausanne* on the 10th of October, 1839. In the following May they reached the mouth of the Columbia from Hawaii, and on the 1st of June all were safely landed at Vancouver. Here the party separated. One of the ministers, Rev. J. H. Frost, was sent to the mouth of the Columbia; Rev. A. F. Waller took charge of a station at Willamette Falls; two others, Rev. W. W. Cone and Rev. Gustavus Hines, went to the Umpqua to begin a new mission, which did not succeed; Mr. Brewer and Dr. Babcock, laymen, reinforced the station at the Dalles; and Rev. J. P. Richmond, with his family and Miss Clark as teacher, went up to the station already begun near Fort Nesqually on Puget Sound. The rest of

them passed up the Willamette to the central mission near the present capital city of Salem, where some took lands, and helped to change this establishment into the truly American colony it now became. About the same time a number of Rocky Mountain trappers settled in the valley, and still further increased the American influence. The colony now contained more than a hundred people.

Visit of Lieutenant Wilkes. In the year 1841 Oregon received a visit from Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, commander of the Pacific Exploring Squadron sent out by the United States government in 1838.[1] Wilkes took pains to travel through all the settled portions of the Willamette valley, and gives a detailed account of what he found there. Near the mouth of the river was a group of young men building a small vessel, which they called *The Star of Oregon,* and which was afterward taken to San Francisco and exchanged for cattle. At the falls were Waller's mission and a trading, or rather salmon-packing, station of the Hudson's Bay Company. At a place called Champoeg there were four or five cabins, in one of which Wilkes was entertained by an old seaman, named Johnson, who had fought in the glorious naval battle between the *Consti-*

[1] Two other noteworthy visitors to Oregon during this year were Sir George Simpson, governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, who was on his trip around the world, and a French diplomat, Duflot de Mofras, at that time connected with the French legation in Mexico. Each wrote a book, in which some account of Oregon is contained.

tution and the *Guerrière*.[1] Farther up the river were observed "many small farms of from fifty to one hundred acres, belonging to the old servants of the company, Canadians, who [had] settled here; they all [appeared] very comfortable and thriving." Twelve miles above Champoeg dwelt the Catholic priest, Father Blanchet, "settled among his flock, . . . doing great good to the settlers in ministering to their temporal as well as spiritual wants." The traveller passed a few more farms before reaching the first of the buildings belonging to the Methodist mission. Wilkes was entertained by Mr. Abernethy, whose family was one of the four living in the "hospital" erected by Dr. White —"A well-built frame edifice with a double piazza in front, . . . perhaps the best building in Oregon." A ride of five miles brought him to "the mill," [2] where he found "the air and stir of a new secular settlement; . . . the missionaries [had] made individual selections of lands to the amount of one thousand acres each, in the prospect of the whole country falling under our laws." He was convinced that they were now more interested in building up the country than in labouring further among the few remaining Indians. Neither did they care to leave the Willamette valley in order to find a more hopeful mission field, but preferred to remain here and direct the future development of the new colony they had done so much to create. Among these

[1] Johnson afterward built the first house in the city of Portland.

[2] This was near the present site of Salem.

people Wilkes heard much about a plan to establish a provisional government for Oregon. This he discouraged, believing that there were as yet too few American settlers to make the experiment a success.

Relations with the Hudson's Bay Company. Wilkes found some of his countrymen disposed to complain of the Hudson's Bay Company; but he appears to have given little heed to these mutterings, knowing that there was no serious cause of trouble between the two nationalities.

Dr. White's company of 120 settlers, 1842. The year after Wilkes's visit, Oregon received the first considerable party of the emigrants coming from the United States by the overland route. Dr. Elijah White, who had arrived in the country in 1837, returned to the East by sea in 1840. Soon after this the government began to think of sending an Indian agent to Oregon, and early in the year 1842 White was appointed to this position, with instructions to take out as many emigrants as could be got together in the West. White delivered lectures in various places, interviewed pioneers in Missouri and elsewhere, and soon had a company of about one hundred and twenty men, who started from Independence, Missouri, in May, and made a successful journey across the mountains. The party took wagons as far as Fort Hall, using pack horses from this place to the Columbia.[1]

[1] About the same time the government sent out Lieutenant John C. Frémont to explore a route into the Rocky Mountains. This was the first of his "path-finding" expeditions.

The Ashburton Treaty, 1842. While this company was on its way across the plains, Lord Ashburton and Daniel Webster were discussing at Washington all the questions remaining unsettled between the United States and Great Britain; and on the 9th of August, they signed what is called the Ashburton Treaty. Americans had hoped that the Oregon question might be settled at this time; but in the negotiations it was soon found that Great Britain was not yet prepared to make concessions, and the treaty omitted all mention of the matter.

CHAPTER X

THE FIRST GREAT MIGRATION

The Oregon situation in 1842. Many people were grievously disappointed at the outcome of the Webster-Ashburton negotiation, because of the silence of the treaty concerning Oregon. Yet, looking back from this distance, it is difficult to see how any serious evil could result from a further delay in settling the question. It had already waited a quarter of a century, during most of which time Americans had no interests in the region west of the Rockies. Now they not only had the beginnings of an actual settlement in the Willamette valley, but everything foreshadowed such a large emigration to the Columbia that our position would soon be much stronger than that of our adversary. The situation was a little like that on the Mississippi prior to the Louisiana Purchase; and just as Jefferson wanted time to plant strong American communities on the banks of this river before forcing an issue with France, so far-sighted statesmen of forty years later were glad to see the pioneers preparing for the journey to Oregon, because this would strengthen the American claim as against Great Britain.[1]

[1] President Tyler, writing three years later (October 7, 1845) to Mr. Calhoun, says that he hesitated to take up the Oregon

The prospect for emigration in 1843; White's letter. Certainly at the time the Ashburton Treaty was signed American prospects were brightening. In the same month (August, 1842), Dr. White wrote a letter from the mountains in which he assured the frontiersmen that the Oregon colony would prove successful, that his company would reach the Willamette in safety, and that a good pilot could be procured to bring out a company the following spring.

Other causes; the Oregon country. This was doubtless one of the causes inducing the pioneers to prepare for the overland march in 1843. But there were many others. The long agitation in Congress, reports, speeches, newspaper articles, and letters had given the pioneering class considerable information about the Oregon country. They knew that the Willamette valley was a favoured land for farmer and stockman, possessing a rich soil, mild climate, and such a combination of prairie and forest, with springs of pure water everywhere, as would make the opening of new farms peculiarly easy and pleasant. In the western states, the settlers had suffered much for the lack of easy transportation, their crops bringing scarcely enough to pay for the labour expended upon them; but in Oregon they would have a navigable river at their

negotiation after the treaty of 1842, "believing that under the convention of joint occupation we stood on the most favourable footing. Our population was already finding its way to the shores of the Pacific, and a few years would see an American Settlement on the Columbia sufficiently strong to defend itself and to protect the rights of the U. States to the territory."

doors, and the ocean but a short distance away. The market for grain was said to be good, cattle were reported to be worth four times what they were bringing in western Missouri, and in each case the cost of producing was very much less. Oregon, also, had other resources, aside from these exceptional agricultural advantages. Her streams were full of the finest salmon, which might be packed and shipped at a good profit; splendid forests of fir and pine, extending down to the water's edge, invited the establishment of lumber mills; and unlimited water power was at hand for all manufacturing purposes. Such a combination of elements, the pioneers thought, would insure the development of a prosperous state on the shores of the Pacific.

"Hard times," slavery, the spirit of adventure, patriotism. For several years, the western people had experienced continuous "hard times," with low prices for everything they had to sell, and almost no opportunity to improve their condition either in farming or other business. The spirit of unrest on these accounts was widespread. Moreover, many persons in the southwestern states were beginning to feel very keenly the evils of slavery, which was causing violent agitation throughout the country, and were anxious to remove their families beyond the reach of its influence. But underneath all other motives was a distinctly American love of adventure, the product of generations of pioneering. It was the spirit of the frontiersmen of the olden time: the longing to open new "trails," to subdue strange lands, and make new settlements.

True, men had abundant opportunity to "move" without crossing the western mountains. They might go from Ohio to Michigan, Wisconsin, or Iowa; from Kentucky to western Missouri, Arkansas, or Texas. But, while thousands were each year doing this, such migrations after all were hardly satisfying to those remembering the deeds of pioneer ancestors who had traversed the "Wilderness Road" into Kentucky, and settled in a wild region amid constant dangers and alarms from hostile savages. The stories of Boone, Kenton, Clark, and scores of others were still recited around frontier firesides by old men and women who spoke out of their own vivid recollections of these border heroes. Such tales fired the imaginations of the young, and prepared a generation of men for a new feat of pioneering, more arduous in some respects than that of seventy years before. But it was an alluring prospect, this journey of two thousand miles through an uninhabited wilderness. The combination of vast plains, great rivers and mountains enticed the dweller in the peaceful, but unpoetic valleys of the interior, while the vision of a farm directly tributary to the western ocean seemed to him to promise a larger measure of economic bliss than he could hope to achieve at home.

Add to all this the belief, which many held, that their going to Oregon would benefit the United States in its contest with Great Britain over territorial rights, and we have a combination of motives powerful enough to set hundreds of pioneers in motion.

Collecting the companies. The approach of spring (1843) found numbers of men in various sections of the country preparing for the march. The companies had been organizing for many months. Correspondence committees in western Missouri received names of intending emigrants as early as September, 1842. An emigration agent from St. Louis, Mr. J. M. Shivley, spent the winter in Washington, kept the people of the West informed as to the progress of legislation respecting Oregon, and tried to induce the Secretary of War to provide a company of troops to escort the emigrants. Senator Linn once more brought up his bill for the establishment of a territorial government and the granting of lands to settlers. It passed the Senate on the 3d of February by the close vote of twenty-four to twenty-two. Although afterward killed in the House of Representatives, the enthusiasm and hope aroused by the passage of the bill through the Senate had much to do with starting new recruits to the place of rendezvous. So did, also, the public meetings held in various places, like Columbus and Chillicothe, Ohio, and Springfield, Illinois, to discuss the Oregon question and to adopt resolutions urging Congress to pass the Linn bill. A few men of large influence in the western communities had decided to emigrate, and they undertook to persuade others by means of newspaper articles, personal interviews, and public addresses. In Bloomington, Iowa, the entire population appears to have been affected by what men called the "Oregon fever"; they held several public meetings, organized an emigrating

party, adopted rules concerning equipment, the route to be taken, and other details of preparation for the journey.

Organizing for the march. Independence, Missouri, had for some years been the general outfitting place for companies of traders, trappers, and emigrants going to the far West. The village lay a few miles from the Missouri River, near the present site of Kansas City, and was the radiating point for many wilderness highways, including the great Santa Fé and Oregon "trails." Most of the small parties from Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa, as well as those from Missouri, gathered at this place. By the middle of May many had arrived, driving in from all directions two, three, a dozen or twenty wagons at a time, with loose stock following behind the train. They now made arrangements for the start, adopting a body of rules, and choosing a pilot to conduct them through the mountains. The pioneers were then ready to move forward.

Peter H. Burnett; the start; Elm Grove. A leading man of this emigration was Peter H. Burnett, a young lawyer from Platte County, Missouri, who had done much to get the company together. He kept a diary during the course of the journey, and on reaching the Willamette wrote a number of letters for the New York *Herald,* giving an account of the trip. Looking back from his far western home to the time of beginning their march from Missouri, and realizing both its difficulties and the significance of what had been done,

he says: "On the 22d of May we began one of the most arduous and important trips undertaken in modern times." The first camp, at Elm Grove, on account of its strange picturesqueness, produced a strong impression upon the mind of Burnett, as it probably did on others. "I have never witnessed a scene," he says, "more beautiful than this. Elm Grove stands in a wide, gently undulating prairie. The moon shed her silvery beams on the white sheets of sixty wagons; a thousand head of cattle grazed upon the surrounding plain; fifty campfires sent up their brilliant flames, and the sound of the sweet violin was heard in the tents. All was stir and excitement."

Electing officers; division of the company. By the time they had crossed the Kansas River (June 1) a good many others had joined the company, which now numbered one hundred and twenty wagons, nearly one thousand persons of all ages, and more than five times as many animals. Stopping to complete the organization, Peter H. Burnett was chosen captain, J. W. Nesmith orderly sergeant, and nine others designated to form a council. A few days later, however, Burnett resigned, and the company was divided into two parts. Each division had sixty wagons; but one was composed mainly of those who had few or no loose cattle, and called "the light column"; while the other contained the owners of the herds, large and small, with which this emigration was encumbered, and took the name of "the cow-column." There was a separate captain for each.

"A Day with the Cow-Column," by Captain Jesse Applegate. The leader of the second division was Captain Jesse Applegate, a man whom the people of Oregon delight to honour as one of the noblest of the pioneers. He is remembered as a statesman, a surveyor, a pathfinder through the southern mountains, and in general a leader in all the varied activities of frontier life in the Northwest. But, fortunately, he was also a writer of elegant English prose; and one of the most delightful productions of his pen is an account which he wrote in 1876 of a typical day on this long march "with the cow-column." Since this essay gives us so lifelike a picture of the great emigration in motion toward the west, and since it describes the camping methods in use for many years among trapping parties and traders, as well as emigrants to Oregon and California, we cannot do better than to transcribe a portion of it.[1]

Daybreak; arousing the camp. "It is four o'clock A.M.; the sentinels on duty have discharged their rifles — the signal that the hours of sleep are over — and every wagon and tent is pouring forth its night tenants, and slow kindling smokes begin largely to rise and float away in the morning air. Sixty men start from the corral, spreading as they make through the vast herd of cattle and horses that make a semicircle around

[1] The paper was read by Mr. Applegate before the Oregon Pioneer Association in 1876, and published in their proceedings; it was reprinted in the Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society for December, 1900.

the encampment, the most distant perhaps two miles away.

Corralling the stock. "The herders pass the extreme verge and carefully examine for trails beyond, to see that none of the animals have strayed or been stolen during the night. This morning no trails lead beyond the outside animals in sight, and by five o'clock the herders begin to contract the great moving circle, and the well-trained animals move slowly towards camp, clipping here and there a thistle or a tempting bunch of grass on the way. In about an hour five thousand animals are close up to the encampment, and the teamsters are busy selecting their teams and driving them inside the corral to be yoked. The corral is a circle one hundred yards deep, formed with wagons connected strongly with each other; the wagon in the rear being connected with the wagon in front by its tongue and ox chains. It is a strong barrier that the most vicious ox cannot break, and in case of attack from the Sioux would be no contemptible intrenchment.

Getting ready for the day's march. "From six to seven o'clock is a busy time; breakfast is to be eaten, the tents struck, the wagons loaded and the teams yoked and brought up in readiness to be attached to their respective wagons. All know when, at seven o'clock, the signal to march sounds, that those not ready to take their places in the line of march must fall into the dusty rear for the day. There are sixty wagons. They have been divided into fifteen divisions or platoons of four wagons each, and each platoon is entitled

to lead in its turn. The leading platoon to-day will be the rear one to-morrow, and will bring up the rear unless some teamster through indolence or negligence has lost his place in the line, and is condemned to that uncomfortable post. It is within ten minutes of seven; the corral but now a strong barricade is everywhere broken, the teams being attached to the wagons. The women and children have taken their places in them. The pilot (a borderer who has passed his life on the verge of civilization and has been chosen to his post of leader from his knowledge of the savage and his experience in travel through roadless wastes) stands ready, in the midst of his pioneers and aids, to mount and lead the way. Ten or fifteen young men, not to-day on duty, form another cluster. They are ready to start on a buffalo hunt, are well mounted and well armed, as they need to be, for the unfriendly Sioux have driven the buffalo out of the Platte, and the hunters must ride fifteen or twenty miles to find them. The cow drivers are hastening, as they get ready, to the rear of their charge, to collect and prepare them for the day's march.

Breaking camp; forward along the trail. "It is on the stroke of seven; the rush to and fro, the cracking of whips, the loud command to oxen, and what seemed to be the inextricable confusion of the last ten minutes has ceased. Fortunately every one has been found and every teamster is at his post. The clear notes of a trumpet sound in the front; the pilot and his guards mount their horses; the leading divisions of the wagons move out of the encampment, and take up

the line of march; the rest fall into their places with the precision of clockwork, until the spot so lately full of life sinks back into that solitude that seems to reign over the broad plain and rushing river as the caravan draws its lazy length towards the distant El Dorado....

The nooning. "The pilot, by measuring the ground and timing the speed of the horses, has determined the rate of each, so as to enable him to select the nooning place as nearly as the requisite grass and water can be had at the end of five hours' travel of the wagons. To-day, the ground being favourable, little time has been lost in preparing the road, so that he and his pioneers are at the nooning place an hour in advance of the wagons, which time is spent in preparing convenient watering places for the animals, and digging little wells near the bank of the Platte. As the teams are not unyoked, but simply turned loose from the wagons, a corral is not formed at noon, but the wagons are drawn up in columns, four abreast, the leading wagon of each platoon on the left, the platoons being formed with that in view. This brings friends together at noon as well as at night.

Session of the "council." "To-day an extra session of the council is being held, to settle a dispute that does not admit of delay, between a proprietor and a young man who has undertaken to do a man's service on the journey for bed and board. Many such cases exist, and much interest is taken in the manner in which this high court, from which there is no appeal, will define the rights of each party in such engagements.

The council was a high court in the most exalted sense. It was a senate composed of the ablest and most respected fathers of the emigration. It exercised both legislative and judicial powers, and its laws and decisions proved equal, and worthy of the high trust reposed in it. . . .

The drowsy afternoon. "It is now one o'clock; the bugle has sounded and the caravan has resumed its westward journey. It is in the same order, but the evening is far less animated than the morning march. A drowsiness has fallen apparently on man and beast; teamsters drop asleep on their perches, and even when walking by their teams; and the words of command are now addressed to the slowly creeping oxen in the soft tenor of women or the piping treble of children, while the snores of the teamsters make a droning accompaniment. . . .

Forming the evening camp; nightfall. "The sun is now getting low in the west, and at length the painstaking pilot is standing ready to conduct the train in the circle which he has previously measured and marked out, which is to form the invariable fortification for the night. The leading wagons follow him so nearly around the circle that but a wagon length separates them. Each wagon follows in its track, the rear closing on the front, until its tongue and ox chains will perfectly reach from one to the other; and so accurate [is] the measure and perfect the practice, that the hindmost wagon of the train always precisely closes the gateway. As each wagon is brought into position it

is dropped from its team (the teams being inside the circle), the team is unyoked, and the yoke and chains are used to connect the wagon strongly with that in its front. Within ten minutes from the time the leading wagon halted, the barricade is formed, the teams unyoked and driven out to pasture. Every one is busy preparing fires . . . to cook the evening meal, pitching tents and otherwise preparing for the night. . . ." The watches "begin at eight o'clock P.M. and end at four o'clock A.M."

Arrival at Fort Hall, August 27. The daily routine, here so graphically described, must have become extremely wearisome to the pioneers and their families after a few months spent upon the dusty, dreary "trail." At the end of ninety-eight days, on the 27th of August, the company reached Fort Hall, the trading post built by Wyeth in 1832 and afterwards sold to the Hudson's Bay Company, which had become a famous way station on the overland route. They were now on the eastern border of the Oregon country, and two-thirds of the distance to the Willamette had been traversed. The hardships already endured from storm, flood, and the unavoidable mishaps of the long journey across the plains were very great; yet all were aware that the most difficult portion of the trip was still before them. Thus far the road had been comparatively good; at least, the wagons always had a well-marked trail to follow. But this practically terminated at Fort Hall, which was connected with the lower country by only a pack trail. No loaded wagons had



The deep-worn Oregon trail as it looked in 1900

ever passed the fort, and when the pioneers set out from their homes in the spring it was generally understood that the wagon road ended at this place. However, they soon found that it would be impossible to secure enough pack horses to carry their families and property to the Columbia, as the small parties of previous years had done, and so it became necessary to go forward with the wagons at all hazards. The company was large, they could send roadmakers ahead to prepare the way, and might be able to overcome even the worst difficulties by united effort. Besides, they had with them Dr. Whitman of the Walla Walla mission, who had taken his light wagon, without a load, as far as Fort Boise in 1836, and who knew more about the possibility of opening a wagon trail through the region still to be traversed than any of the other men. Whitman felt certain they could succeed, urged the company to make the venture, and offered to act as guide. His services to the emigrants from Fort Hall westward were very great, and are remembered with gratitude by the early pioneers of the Northwest.

From Fort Hall to Waiilatpu down the Columbia. They left Fort Hall on the 30th of August, passed Fort Boise September 20, and ten days later came in sight of the Grand Ronde, the famous circular valley of the Blue Mountains. Its peaceful beauties are said to have so impressed the travellers, after the toils and hardships of the days spent in the desert, that some broke into tears of joy as they looked down upon it from the high plateau above. Ten days later they reached Whit-

man's station, where many of them bought supplies of wheat and potatoes for the trip to western Oregon. A portion of the emigrants arranged to leave their cattle in the Walla Walla valley; some drove herds overland; while the families, the wagons, and other property were taken down the Columbia in boats and rafts. By the end of November all had reached the Willamette valley.[1]

[1] Most of the sources from which this account of the great emigration is written were discovered by the writer while searching through files of old newspapers preserved at Madison, Wisconsin, St. Louis and Columbia, Missouri. A portion of the matter thus found has been reprinted in the Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, where it can be conveniently referred to. The most important single source for the journey is the Burnett *Herald* letters, reprinted in the Quarterly for December, 1902. A series of other short letters appears in the Quarterly for June, 1903, and still others in several recent numbers.

CHAPTER XI

THE FIRST AMERICAN GOVERNMENT ON THE PACIFIC

Importance of the emigration of 1843. The emigration whose organization and movements have just been described marks a new starting point in the history of the Northwest. Up to this time we have been dealing with events which may be looked upon as introductory; now we begin actually to see the process of state building on the shores of the Pacific. Just as in Virginia the colony can hardly be said to have been planted prior to the arrival of Delaware's party in 1610; as in Massachusetts it was the great company brought out by Winthrop in 1630 which firmly established the English people, although the beginnings of settlement already existed; so on the Pacific coast the emigration of 1843 closes the period of experiment, and gives us a true, self-supporting American colony. In the present chapter we shall do scarcely more than point out some of the changes produced in Oregon during the succeeding three years as a result of this influx of new people.

Beginnings of the agitation for a government. The earliest attempts to form a provisional government for the Willamette colony were made several years prior to 1843; but, as we shall see, the organization

was not put into effective operation till after the new immigrants arrived. When our people began going to the country there were no American laws to control their actions, and no government whatever except that which was exercised over British subjects by officers of the Hudson's Bay Company. The missionaries in the Willamette valley, and the other settlers who gradually collected there, regarded this as one of their principal grievances, and repeatedly petitioned Congress to extend the laws of the United States over them. But, as we have seen, that body could not be induced to take any action. In 1840, with the arrival of the *Lausanne* company and the Rocky Mountain trappers of that year, the American party felt greatly strengthened and began to talk of organizing a provisional or temporary government on their own account, in the expectation of giving it up whenever the United States should be prepared to extend its authority over the country. The French settlers, however, being attached to the fur company, remained satisfied with conditions as they were.

The first step toward an organization, 1841. Early in 1841 an incident occurred which brought out sharply the need of some regular authority, and set in motion plans to secure a political organization. Ewing Young, the pioneer stockman of the Willamette valley, whose connection with the cattle company has already been described, in the course of nine years' residence in the country, had become possessed of a large herd of cattle and considerable other property. In February

of this year he died, without making any provision by will for the disposition of his estate, and so far as known leaving no heir. His neighbours were naturally very much interested in the case, and it is claimed that those who gathered at Young's funeral issued a call for a general meeting to consider what was to be done with this property. On the 17th of February, when the public meeting occurred, resolutions were offered providing for a committee to draft a constitution and laws. This body was selected on the 18th, and besides the settlers chose Dr. Ira L. Babcock of the Methodist mission to be supreme judge with probate powers. They provided also for a clerk of courts and recorder, a high sheriff, and three constables. The meeting then adjourned to the second Tuesday in June. Dr. Babcock, on the 15th of April, appointed an administrator for Ewing Young's property, this being, it is believed, the first official act of the Oregon provisional government.

The plan miscarries. When the June meeting took place it was found that the committee appointed to draft a constitution and laws had done nothing, not even so much as to meet for consultation. The reason was plain enough. In their anxiety to gain the support of the French settlers the missionary party, which controlled the earlier meetings, had succeeded in making the Catholic Father Blanchet, chairman of the committee. But he refused to take any interest in the matter and failed to call the committee together. Blanchet now resigned, and his place being filled by an

American it seemed that something would probably be done. The committee was instructed to meet on a particular day and report to a meeting of the settlers set for October. But a new obstacle appeared in the person of Lieutenant Wilkes, who showed himself decidedly opposed to the plan of a provisional government. The result was that the whole matter was dropped for more than a year.

The question resumed in 1843; the "wolf meeting." In the fall of 1842 Dr. White arrived as Indian agent, bringing his company of one hundred and twenty new settlers. Although the French party had also been strengthened, it now appeared to some of the Americans that the time for action had come. The matter was discussed during the winter, and with the approach of spring a favourable opportunity arose to secure a public meeting. The settlers' herds had suffered much from the ravages of wild beasts, an evil which called for some means of exterminating the forest foes. On the 2d of February, 1843, a group of persons gathered at the Oregon Institute appointed a committee to "notify a general meeting," which was held on the second Monday of March. The committee was prepared with resolutions advising that bounties be paid for killing wolves, lynxes, bears, and panthers; that a subscription fund be raised for that purpose; and that officers be appointed to manage the business. These being adopted, the more important and interesting resolution was offered, "That a committee [of twelve] be appointed to take into consideration the propriety of

taking steps for the civil and military protection of the colony." [1] This also received a favourable vote, and now the plan to create a provisional government was fully launched.

The provisional government voted at Champoeg, May 2, 1843. Only two months were allowed to intervene between the appointment of the committee and the meeting to consider its report. It was a time of great political activity in the settlement. The French people were still generally opposed to the scheme and were encouraged in their opposition by the Hudson's Bay Company. There was much uncertainty in the minds of the settlers as they gathered at Champoeg on the 2d of May. The committee, however, reported in favour of establishing a government. When a motion was made to adopt this report, the vote was very close and some one called for a division of the house. At this point arose the stalwart figure of "Joe" Meek, one of the most picturesque of the "mountain men," and a person of considerable influence among certain classes in the community. Stepping out grandly in front of the crowd of excited men he shouted: "Who's for a divide? All in favour of the report and of an organization, follow me." The count was made, we are told, after half an hour of the greatest confusion, and resulted in fifty-two (52) votes in favour and of fifty (50) against the resolu-

[1] This resolution was proposed by Mr. W. H. Gray, who was then living in the Willamette valley, and who bore a prominent part in the affairs of the colony at this time.

tion. So the project to organize a provisional government was carried.

Election of officers; the July meeting. The officers recommended by the committee were chosen before the adjournment. They were a supreme judge, a clerk and recorder, a high sheriff (Joe Meek was very properly elected to this post), three magistrates, three constables, a major and three captains of militia. A legislative committee composed of nine members was also chosen at this meeting, and instructed to report a code of laws to be voted on by the people July 5. The pioneers who gathered at Champoeg to hear a Fourth of July address by Rev. Gustavus Hines remained over to the next day and ratified the provisions of the so-called First Organic Law.[1]

A government by "compact." "We the people of Oregon Territory," so the preamble of this famous document recites, "for purposes of mutual protection, and to secure peace and prosperity among ourselves, agree to adopt the following laws and regulations until such time as the United States of America extend their jurisdiction over us." Here we have another illustration of the well-known American method of forming a government by "compact," or agreement. Two hundred and twenty-three years earlier, when the Pilgrim Fathers met to draw up their "Mayflower

[1] This document, as well as the provisional constitution of 1845, may be conveniently found in Strong and Schafer's "Government of the American People," Oregon edition, Boston, 1901, Appendix.

Compact," this principle was employed for the first time in American history, and soon afterward the early colonists of Connecticut followed it in their "Fundamental Orders." When, at a later time, American pioneers crossed the Alleghenies to eastern Tennessee, and found themselves beyond the jurisdiction of any seaboard state, they formed the "Watauga Association." Similar pioneer governments were created in Kentucky, on the Cumberland River, and elsewhere.[1] The Willamette settlers were following in the footsteps of their ancestors.

The emigration of 1843 saves the provisional government. The work of the pioneers at Champoeg was of considerable importance in the history of Oregon and the Pacific coast; for it called the attention of men everywhere to the American colony in this region; it quickened the interest of the United States government; and announced to Great Britain that her subjects were no longer completely dominant in the Pacific Northwest. Yet, while the Americans then in the country deserve credit for taking the first steps, these results were largely due to the appearance of the great emigration in the fall. It changed the small American majority into an overwhelming one; provided able political leaders, like Burnett, Applegate, McCarver, Nesmith, Waldo, and Lovejoy; increased the property of the country; and gave a feel-

[1] The people of Vermont, for example, had a government of their own, created by compact or agreement among themselves, for fourteen years before the state was admitted to the Union.

ing of security and stability which only numbers can impart.

Governmental improvements made in 1844–1845. The government as adopted in July, 1843, while probably the best that could then be secured, was in some respects very weak. Instead of a governor there was to be an executive committee of three. The land law, which was of greater interest to most of the settlers than any other feature, was especially defective, because it allowed the Catholic and Protestant missions to claim each an entire township, aside from the land their members held as individual settlers. Lastly, there was no way to raise money for the support of the government except by private contributions, a thoroughly inefficient and always disappointing method. The legislative committee of 1844, made up mainly of the newcomers, on their own responsibility, revised the entire system, providing for a governor, a house of representatives, a more satisfactory judiciary, a new land law permitting none but actual settlers to hold claims, and above all a means of raising taxes to support the government. This last was the keystone of their political arch, as the leaders well knew, and they were wise enough to fit it exactly to its purpose. The law required that every settler's property should be assessed on a regular basis, and in case any one refused to pay the tax apportioned to him, he was to lose the right to vote and all other benefits of the government. If his claim were jumped, the court could not relieve him; if a thief were to drive off his cattle

or slaughter them in the pasture, the sheriff and the constables would turn a deaf ear to his appeal for help. He would become an outlaw.

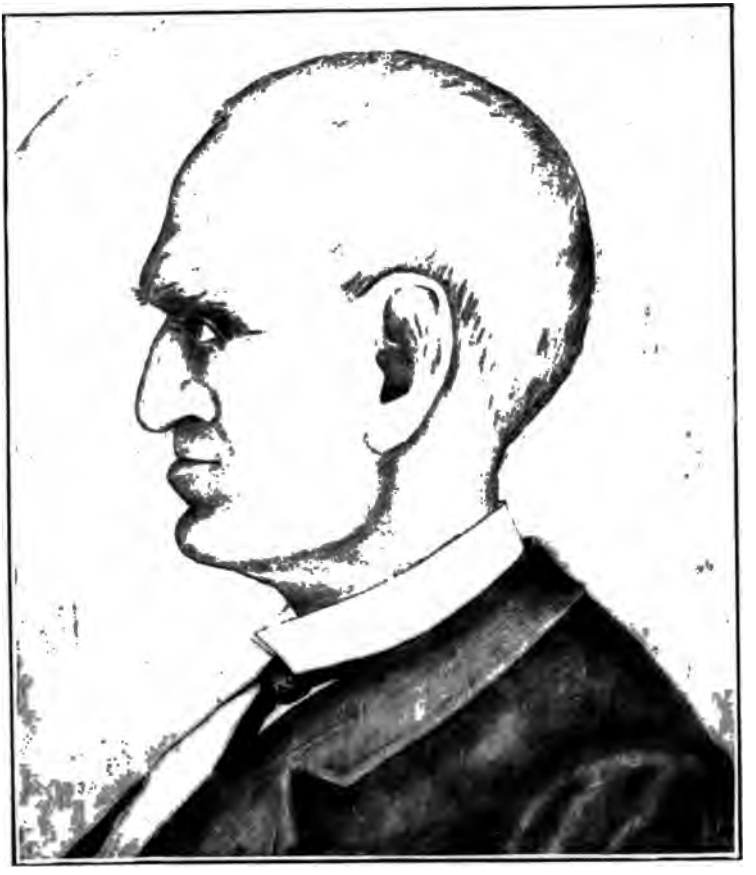
The reform of 1844 fails to satisfy. The governmental reform of 1844, while effective in certain respects, created another political agitation in the Oregon colony. Some no doubt were alarmed at the very success of the new law relating to taxation. Others felt aggrieved over the alteration in the land laws. Still others professed to feel outraged because the legislative committee failed to extend the jurisdiction of the provisional government over that part of Oregon lying north of the Columbia. They raised against the committee the charge of a want of patriotism. In fact, Dr. McLoughlin reported that a party among the settlers wished to establish an Oregon or Pacific State which should be independent of both the United States and Great Britain. Still others found serious fault with the manner in which the committee had wrought these profound changes. They had set aside an organic or fundamental law adopted by the people themselves without so much as saying "by your leave," and had created virtually a new constitution as well as a new legal code without submitting any portion of their work to the people for acceptance or rejection. In a word, the legislative committee had enacted a political revolution, a thing dangerous in itself and, by the reaction it was bound to engender, likely to prove disastrous to the colony.

The revision of 1845. The Legislative Committee

of 1845, headed by Jesse Applegate, resolved upon a thorough-going revision of the government. They presented to the people a choice between the fundamental law adopted in 1843, and a revised draft, much improved in literary style and in completeness, which had been drawn up by Mr. Applegate. The people balloted and adopted the revised draft by a very large majority. They also continued the committee in office. Then the Legislative Committee reconvened, passed necessary laws, and adjourned.

Thus the political problem in Oregon was settled. The constitution, based on compact, was similar in form to the constitution of an American state. It established a good government,— firm, just, and effective in all its departments. The settlers supposed it was to last only a few months, believing the United States was about to take control of the country; but in fact this event did not occur till nearly four years later. In the meantime there was no reasonable cause of complaint against the government maintained by the sturdy, sober, order-loving pioneers themselves.

Effect of the great migration on later emigrations. While these political matters were being settled, western Oregon was filling up with new people whose coming was due very largely to the success of the 1843 emigration. When that company started, many thousands of people followed their movements with anxiety, not a few regarded them as foolish adventurers, and Horace Greeley declared: "This emigration of more than a thousand persons in one body to



JESSE APPLEGATE
A splendid type of the pioneer state builder



Oregon wears an aspect of insanity." [1] When they reached the Columbia in safety, proving that loaded wagons could be taken through without serious difficulty, a great change instantly came over the thought of the country with respect to Oregon. It was a startling thing to eastern people to be told, by a man who had made the trip, "You can move here [from Missouri] with less expense than you could to Tennessee or Kentucky." Moreover, many prominent pioneers wrote home giving favourable accounts of the country. Burnett said, "If man cannot supply all his wants here, he cannot anywhere." Another declared: "The prospect is quite good for a young man to make a fortune in this country, as all kinds of produce are high and likely to remain so from the extensive demand. The Russian settlements in Asia [Alaska?], the Sandwich Islands, a great portion of California, and the whaling vessels of the Northwest coast procure their supplies from this place." McCarver found "the soil of this valley . . . equal to that of Iowa or any other portion of the United States; . . ." and T. B. Wood wrote, "The prairies of this region are . . . equal to any in Missouri or Illinois." Such letters were commonly printed, first in the local paper

[1] New York *Tribune*, July 22, 1843. He feared that their provisions would give out, their stock perish for want of grass and water, their children and women starve. "For what," exclaimed Mr. Greeley, "do they brave the desert, the wilderness, the savage, the snowy precipices of the Rocky Mountains, the weary summer march, the storm-drenched bivouac and the gnawings of famine?"

of some western town, then in the more widely read journals of the country, with the result that Oregon took its place in the popular mind by the side of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Texas, as a territory possessing attractions for the home seeker.

The emigration of 1844. The emigrating company of 1844 numbered about fourteen hundred. The parties reached the Missouri frontier early in the spring and set out in good time. But the wetness of the season caused many delays, so that they reached the western slope very late, and mostly in want of provisions. A small party was hurried forward to bring supplies from the Willamette valley, some bought food of the missionaries on the Walla Walla, and even of the Indians, and finally, late in the fall, most of them reached their destination in a sorry state. The rains having already set in, there was no chance to provide proper shelter, and many suffered great inconvenience, if not actual hardship. The earlier settlers were forced to listen to a good deal of repining from the newcomers; but, as one of them wrote, this "only lasted during the winter. In the spring, when the clouds cleared away, and the grass and flowers sprang up beneath the kindling rays of a bright Oregon sun, their spirits revived with reviving nature, and by the succeeding fall they had themselves become old settlers, and formed a part of us, their views and feelings, in the meantime, having undergone a total change." [1]

[1] Quoted from Burnett's "Recollections of an Old Pioneer," New York, 1880. The portion of this book relating to Oregon,

The emigration of 1845; horrors of Meek's "cut-off." In the year 1845 Oregon received the largest of the early emigrations, a body of nearly three thousand people. They started, not in a single caravan like the earlier parties, but in companies of fifty, seventy-five, a hundred, or two hundred wagons. All went well till after they passed Fort Boise, where the emigrants encountered Stephen H. L. Meek, who offered to guide them over a trail by way of the Malheur River, said to be much shorter than that commonly used.[1] Unfortunately, about one hundred and fifty wagons followed him into the most barren and desolate country that eastern Oregon contains, and where as it proved there was no road except an old pack trail. Stock perished, food gave out, the emigrants became desperate in their anxiety to find water. When they reached a little oasis in the desert, they formed a camp, while mounted men to the number of one hundred scoured the country in every direction for water, only to return at nightfall without finding it. This was continued for several days in succession. Meantime the children and the weaker adults were falling sick, and many of them were dying. In the midst of this despair a galloping horseman brought the glad news of the discovery of water. The hated guide had found it. Grief was now turned to joy; loud shouts

which contains a large amount of valuable matter on early conditions, the emigration of 1843, etc., has been reprinted in the Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, Vol. V.

[1] Sixty wagons had turned off at Fort Hall to go to California.

rang out; there was laughing and clapping of hands. But some stood reverently silent, with bowed heads and eyes brimming over with tears of thankfulness. The stream found proved to be a branch of the Des Chutes River, along the course of which the travellers passed down to the Dalles, whence a few days brought them to the Willamette. They had suffered the most terrible agony on the route, wasted forty days of precious time, and worse than all, lost about seventy-five of their number.[1] Those emigrants who followed the customary route entered the valley at the usual time without serious mishap.

Population of Oregon; its distribution. The population of Oregon, which was doubled by the arrival of the emigrants of 1845, now numbered about six thousand, settled in five counties, of which all but one were in the Willamette valley. They were Yamhill, Clackamas, Tualatin, Champoeg, and Clatsop. In the election of 1845 the total vote for governor was five hundred and four. The following year it was more than doubled, and a new county, Polk, had been added to the list of those lying south of the Columbia, while there was now also a county, named Columbia, north of the river.

Origin of the Puget Sound settlement. The new northern county has its explanation partly in the fact that a few Americans were by this time settled on the waters of Puget Sound. When the colonists first be-

[1] The names of thirty-four, nearly all adults, were printed in the eastern papers of the next year.

gan coming to Oregon they were usually dependent on the Hudson's Bay Company for supplies, stock, tools, and in general everything necessary to start them in farming. McLoughlin, believing that Great Britain would at last come into possession of the region north of the Columbia, tried to prevent American settlers from taking claims on that side of the river, directing them all to the Willamette. For a time this plan worked well, but when the best lands of the valley were all taken up, and Americans became so numerous in the country as to feel somewhat independent of the fur company, a few pioneers began to think of taking claims north of the river. Of the party which arrived in the fall of 1844 a few men, under the lead of M. T. Simmons, tried to reach Puget Sound overland, but failing, returned to the neighbourhood of Vancouver, where they spent the winter. The following summer Simmons started out once more, with six companions, made his way up the Cowlitz to the head of navigation, and then westward to the lower end of the Sound. One of their fellow-emigrants of the previous year, John R. Jackson, was already established in a cabin on the highland north of the Cowlitz, and the pioneers also saw the large farm opened some years before by the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, a branch of the fur company. They were delighted with the prospects of the Puget Sound country, with its splendid opportunities for commerce and manufactories; and returning for his family, Simmons settled, in October, on a claim near the site of Olympia. Four

other families and two single men took claims in the same neighbourhood, and thus was the foundation laid for a new community in the north.

The Hudson's Bay Company accepts the protection of the provisional government. While these sturdy frontiersmen were hewing a road through the jungle north of Cowlitz Landing, the settlers in the Willamette were winning their greatest political victory by inducing the officers of the fur company to bring themselves, their people, and all the property of the organization under the protection of the provisional government. This was achieved on the 15th of August. The monopoly, which had dominated the affairs of the Northwest for a quarter of a century, had at last sunk to a subordinate position; and the Oregon question, so far as control of the country itself was concerned, had been settled by the pioneers.[1]

[1] McLoughlin made a special arrangement with the officers of the government, whereby the company was to be taxed only on the merchandise which it sold to settlers. Jesse Applegate is the man who negotiated this important agreement.

CHAPTER XII

THE OREGON BOUNDARY SETTLED

We have seen how George Canning in 1824 fixed the British Oregon policy by demanding the Columbia as a boundary from its mouth to the forty-ninth parallel. He was willing, indeed, to concede to the United States free ports on DeFuca's Strait, and even a small, detached portion of territory with ports north of the Columbia. But he would not hear of extending the forty-ninth parallel as the boundary westward from the Rocky Mountains to the sea.

Ashburton's instructions; the Ashburton-Webster negotiations. On the rock of Canning's policy, or that of the United States based upon the forty-ninth parallel, the negotiations of 1824 and of 1826–7 came to grief. No new effort was made to solve the boundary problem till 1842, when Lord Ashburton was sent to the United States as special commissioner to settle with Secretary of State Daniel Webster all causes of dispute between the two countries. Ashburton's main purpose was to settle the northeastern boundary, between Maine and Canada, the dispute over which had become especially dangerous because conflicts had broken out between British subjects and American citizens in the disputed territory. But Ash-

burton was instructed to settle the less important question relating to Oregon provided this could be done in a manner satisfactory to Great Britain. There is no evidence that Lord Aberdeen, British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, made an independent study of the Oregon question at this time. It seems, rather, that in his instructions to Ashburton he simply followed in the footsteps of Canning. In any event, the concessions Ashburton was permitted to make were those Canning had offered; the boundary he might agree to was the Canning boundary along the Columbia and the forty-ninth parallel. On the other hand, he was instructed to reject, outright, the thrice offered American boundary, along the forty-ninth parallel to the sea.

Webster desired Northern California. When Webster and Ashburton reached the Oregon question in their discussions it seemed at first as if a chance of agreement existed. For, although Webster complained that the Columbia boundary, demanded by Ashburton, would leave the United States without a good harbour on the Pacific coast, he yet suggested that the matter might be adjusted provided the United States could secure from Mexico Northern California together with the great harbour of San Francisco.

Did he mean to exchange Northern Oregon for Northern California? This remark of Mr. Webster, which was reported by Ashburton to Lord Aberdeen, seems to indicate that Webster would have been willing to abandon Northern Oregon. But Webster later de-

clared that at no time had he been prepared to accept a boundary less favourable than the forty-ninth parallel. Hence, if he was willing to give up our claim to Northern Oregon at all, we must infer that he would have yielded it only in exchange for something he deemed more valuable to the United States, and possibly he thought Northern California would be more valuable. But California belonged to Mexico and could be secured by treaty with Mexico, not by treaty with Britain. Why, then, did Webster mention this matter to Ashburton? To this question one answer is, that Webster was willing to receive from the British government a tender of their good offices with Mexico to induce her to sell Northern California to the United States. Had Britain responded in this way, and had she secured Mexico's consent to the transfer, it is possible that Webster would have been willing to sign a treaty giving Britain the Oregon boundary she desired. Since Ashburton merely answered that Britain would make no objection to our acquisition of Northern California, but assumed no responsibility in the matter, Webster refused to discuss the Oregon boundary question further at that time.

Wilkes's report. Ashburton concluded that the return of Lieutenant Charles Wilkes to Washington from his famous exploring cruise in the Pacific, during which he had visited both Oregon and California, was the cause of Webster's loss of interest in the Oregon boundary settlement. It was understood, he wrote, that Wilkes reported very unfavourably upon the har-

bour at the mouth of the Columbia, where he lost the ship *Peacock*[1] in 1841, but very favourably upon the harbours in Puget Sound. We now know that Wilkes argued against giving up any part of the territory west of the Rockies and between the parallels of 42° and 54° 40′. He insisted on the advisability of excluding the British entirely. His reasons were that to divide the territory on the line of the forty-ninth parallel would leave Fraser River wholly outside our boundary; it would cut off the middle and eastern sections of the country below the forty-ninth parallel from their natural source of supplies of timber; and it would lead to commercial and boundary disputes without number.[2] It is not clear that this report influenced Webster greatly, though it probably stimulated the zeal of some of those politicians who not long afterward began to clamour for "Fifty-Four-Forty."

However that may be, the spring of 1843 saw the rise of a remarkable agitation in favour of the American occupation of "the whole of Oregon." Behind the movement was resentment over the defeat of Linn's bill, and resentment also against Secretary Webster who, it was rumoured, was willing to concede the Columbia boundary to Great Britain if she

[1] Later, he had some thought of going to London as special commissioner to settle the question, and he had in mind, as one plan, the so-called "tri-partite" idea, namely: an arrangement to be entered into by the U. S. conjunction with Britain and Mexico by which he should secure Northern California from Mexico.

[2] See Wilkes's report as reprinted in Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, v. XII, pp. 269-299.

would persuade or coerce Mexico into selling us California. Local meetings were held in various parts of the Mississippi valley, and these resulted in the calling of an Oregon convention at Cincinnati in July. 1843.[1] Nearly one hundred delegates were in attendance, and not only the Mississippi valley, but the entire country was interested in their proceedings.

Origin of the demand for 54° 40′ as the northern boundary. This convention adopted resolutions declaring that the United States had an undoubted right to the country west of the Rocky Mountains between the parallel of 42° on the south and 54° 40′ on the north. In other words, the line established in 1824 to separate American interests from those of Russia was regarded as the rightful northern boundary of the United States in the Pacific Northwest. This would have shut Great Britain out from the territory west of the Rockies, notwithstanding the explorations of her Mackenzies, her Thompsons, Cooks, and Vancouvers; and would have left no beaver ground on the Pacific slope for her traders, who had controlled the commerce of that region for thirty years.

Fifty-Four-Forty or Fight. When the Democratic convention met at Baltimore in 1844 and nominated James K. Polk for President, it was the western

[1] The idea of a Mississippi valley convention to consider the Oregon question originated at Columbus, Ohio. The Ohio *Statesman* for this period is the best source of information on the entire movement. Its files were consulted in the library of the Wisconsin Historical Society at Madison.

influence which succeeded in making the Oregon question a feature of the resolutions. "Fifty-Four-Forty or Fight" was not, indeed, a plank in the platform, though it became in some quarters a campaign slogan; but when President Polk, in his inaugural address, declared his belief that our title to "the whole of Oregon was clear and unquestionable" the agitation had indeed reached its logical result. The government was now maintaining the extreme claims of the western expansionists, and without a moderating influence at London or at Washington, or at both capitals, war, seemingly, would have been inevitable. For, with a nation of Englishmen supporting Canning's doctrine that Oregon must be apportioned between the two nations by drawing a dividing line along the Columbia and the forty-ninth parallel, and an American nation advancing a claim to the entire country which previously it had offered to divide on the forty-ninth parallel the chances of a peaceable settlement of differences were not promising.

Britain's "unquestionable" rights asserted. Fortunately, before matters were pressed to extremity, each nation came to understand clearly that the other would go to war rather than make humiliating concessions, and good sense on both sides enabled them to avoid that calamity. The way in which the British Parliament and press treated President Polk's inaugural statement proved to our government that Great Britain would never consent to be ousted from the region west of the Rockies, whatever her historical rights

there might be. We now saw that she also had rights deemed "clear and unquestionable" which her people would support at all costs.

It proved somewhat difficult to enlighten British opinion as to what were the lower limits of the American demands. The Ashburton negotiations at first threw the matter in some doubt on account of Webster's suggestion about Northern California. Still, Lord Ashburton was finally convinced that, for one reason or another, Webster did not care at that time to consider the Columbia boundary proposed by him. When the popular clamour for Fifty-Four-Forty was taken up by the President himself, the British government should have been convinced that no possibility remained of securing Canning's boundary.

Peaceful policy of British statesmen; new negotiations; Pakenham and Calhoun. Doubtless these facts had their influence, especially upon the British cabinet leaders. But in matters of foreign policy public opinion is apt to change slowly and Canning's Oregon policy especially died hard. Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen, the British premier and the Foreign Secretary, were anxious to avoid a rupture with the United States and after Ashburton's failure they proposed a new negotiation, which they agreed might take place at Washington also. At the beginning of the year 1844 Richard Pakenham (afterwards Sir Richard) was sent to the United States as minister, with the special mission of settling the Oregon boundary question. Pakenham after some months, during

which the secretaryship of state came into new hands, opened negotiations with Secretary Calhoun, but again with no prospect of reaching results. For the most part, old arguments were repeated, perhaps in new forms, but with no increase in cogency. Pakenham learned, however, that the United States would accept nothing short of the forty-ninth parallel boundary, although they might be willing to let that boundary run to the sea-coast only, the line from that point deflecting southward around the southern end of Vancouver's Island, the whole of which, in that case, would go to Britain. Calhoun assured him solemnly that this was the largest concession our government could possibly make, and that the Senate could never be induced to ratify a treaty giving Great Britain a more favourable boundary.

Polk, Buchanan, and Pakenham. It was during the discussions between Calhoun and Pakenham that the election occurred which placed James K. Polk in the presidential chair on a platform declaring for "the whole of Oregon." Polk's inaugural address boded ill for the future negotiations, yet Polk and his Secretary, Buchanan, gave assurances that they wished a peaceful settlement, and the discussions went on much as before, though with some loss of mutual respect, confidence and forbearance on the part of the negotiators. After a good deal of preliminary sparring, Buchanan made a new offer of the forty-ninth parallel as a boundary, but with no modifications respecting either Vancouver's Island or the commercial priv-

ileges desired by Britain, and the offer was refused by Pakenham without referring it to his government. Buchanan then withdrew the offer and intimated that no new offer would be made by the United States.

A tense situation. This left the question in a critical state, inasmuch as Congress was bound to do something for the protection of American settlers in Oregon and the temper of that body was by no means conciliatory. The saving thing in the situation was that the British government learned in time the reason behind the popular American interest in Oregon and so was able to gauge more accurately the concessions which would be demanded from her.

A new argument; settlement of Oregon. In the discussion between Calhoun and Pakenham one new argument was brought forward by the American negotiator. He said: "Our well founded claim, grounded on contiguity, has greatly strengthened during the same period [since 1818] by the rapid advance of our population towards the territory; its great increase, especially in the valley of the Mississippi, as well as the greatly increased facility of passing to the territory by more accessible routes; and the far stronger and rapidly swelling tide of population that has recently commenced flowing into it,—an emigration estimated at not less than 1,000 during the past [year, 1843] and 1,500 during the present year [1844] has flowed into it. . . . There can be no doubt, now, that the operation of the same causes which impelled our population westward from the

shores of the Atlantic across the Allegheny to the valley of the Mississippi will impel them onward with accumulating force across the Rocky Mountains into the valley of the Columbia, and that the whole region drained by it is destined to be peopled by us."

Its importance not realized by Britain; new information sought. At that point, therefore, the movement of pioneers into Oregon became a factor to be reckoned with by Britain because it was changing the relative situation of the two nations that entered into the joint-occupation agreement in 1818. The British government had hardly been more than aware that such a movement was going on; and till a late hour of the negotiations they had no conception of its true importance. Sir George Simpson had reported the presence of a few American families in Oregon in 1842. But Ashburton at about the same time declared that it would be impossible for the United States to colonize Oregon "for many years to come." Pakenham held and expressed similar views. But apparently the British cabinet was not satisfied with the information its diplomatic representatives could give on that subject and they appealed to the Hudson's Bay Company as more likely to know the facts about the settlement already existing in Oregon. From Governor Simpson they learned that as early as 1843 the American population in Oregon was at least twice as numerous as the British. When the news of Polk's warlike inaugural reached London a warship was ordered to the Oregon coast and soon thereafter two

military officers, Lieutenants Warré and Vavasour, were sent to the Columbia overland from Canada to examine into the means necessary to defend the country if the United States should attempt to secure it by force.[1]

A British warship in Oregon waters; Lieutenant Peel's survey; Lieutenant Peel's report. The *America* frigate anchored in Fuca's Strait August 31, 1846. Her captain was Sir John Gordon, a brother of Lord Aberdeen, and one of her younger officers was Lieutenant William Peel, fourth son of Sir Robert Peel. Captain Gordon sent Lieutenant Peel to Vancouver, and across the Columbia "to examine and procure information of the present state of the new American settlement on the Willamette." Sailing promptly to the Hawaiian Islands, Gordon there detached Peel to carry his information to London. Peel sailed to Mexico, crossed the Atlantic, and was back at London by the 9th or 10th of February, 1846. Since he had complete knowledge of the local situation in Oregon — the dominance of the Americans in political matters, the extent of their settlements southward, the fact that they had penetrated to Puget Sound in the north, the feeling of helplessness on the part of the Hudson's Bay Company, which impelled them to come under the provisional government for their own safety — it is easy to see what lights he could throw on the desira-

[1] See Documents relative to Warré and Vavasour's Military Reconnaissance in Oregon, 1846. Edited by Joseph Schafer, Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, X, pp. 1-99.

bility of securing a settlement of the boundary. Peel, who had visited California also, summed up his impressions by declaring: "The American settlements on the Willamette, running *south,* and those on the Sacramento running *north,* will . . . very soon unite. Their junction will render the possession of port San Francisco to the Americans inevitable. . . ."

Its possible influence. The clear knowledge of conditions in Oregon interpreted to the British government the American attitude on the Oregon question. They now knew why our government refused to accede to the offer of the Columbia boundary, even with port privileges to the north; they knew, also, why Congress was so determined to bring the Oregon question to an issue, even if that issue meant war.

With this knowledge in their possession, the British government was politically in position to recede from the principles of the Canning boundary without loss of parliamentary or popular support. We now know that Lord Aberdeen at least, and possibly also Sir Robert Peel, had long been ready, as individuals, to accept the forty-ninth parallel boundary, with modifications as to Vancouver's Island, the free use of the northern ports and of the Columbia River for commercial purposes.[1] But the cabinet, the Parliament, and the country must be educated to the necessity of giving up Canning's policy and this made necessary a

[1] This fact is revealed in a private letter of Aberdeen to Pakenham dated March 4, 1844.

complete exposition of the new status of the two nations relative to the Oregon territory.

A treaty proposed by Britain; accepted and signed. Finally, at the psychological moment as it proved, Lord Aberdeen submitted a proposal in the form of a treaty draft. It made the forty-ninth parallel the boundary to the sea, but gave the British the whole of Vancouver's Island, with the freedom of the ports in that region and also the freedom of navigating the Columbia. President Polk asked the Senate's advice on this treaty and was urged to accept it. The treaty was concluded June 15, 1846.[1]

[1] For almost half a century the public has heard much, at times, about the influence Dr. Marcus Whitman exerted upon the course of the Oregon negotiations. So vigorous has been the discussion of this question that a voluminous literature of the subject is now in existence in the form of books, pamphlets, and newspaper or magazine articles. Space limitations forbid the presentation here of even a small proportion of the titles. Perhaps the most thorogoing statement of the Whitman-saved-Oregon theory is found in Myron Eells's "Marcus Whitman, Pathfinder and Patriot." The most searching criticism of the claim that Whitman saved Oregon is in Edward G. Bourne's "Essays in Historical Criticism," under the title "The Whitman Legend." Much documentary material on the subject is found in William I. Marshall's "Acquisition of Oregon."

The present writer, while regarding Whitman as a noble Christian pioneer and missionary and while anxious to give him credit for every service he performed for Oregon, cannot subscribe to the theory that Whitman saved Oregon, or that he had any substantial influence beyond that of other important missionaries or pioneers upon the course of the history which eventuated in the boundary treaty of 1846.

missions planted on the upper Columbia by Dr. Whitman and his associates in 1836 and the years following were influenced very little by the colonizing movement described in the preceding chapters. Their location on the broad interior plains prevented them from quickly becoming centres of extensive settlements like the Willamette mission, so favourably located near the coast. Therefore, while western Oregon had been growing into a state, the up-river missionaries were labouring faithfully to teach the elements of civilization to a horde of barbarous natives. For a few years their success was sufficient to bring considerable encouragement. But, as the novelty of the new life and teaching wore off, the interest also slackened; Catholic priests came into the country, teaching by different methods from those used by the Protestants, and, as we have seen, this tended to disturb the relations between the missionaries and their wards. Worse than all, a number of dissipated, renegade Americans wandered among the tribes, doing all the mischief in their power.

Action of the American board closing the southern missions. At last discouragements mounted to such a height that the American board at Boston, regarding the work in Oregon as partly a failure, passed a resolution to close the missions at Waiilatpu and Lapwai, retaining only the one in the north.[1] News of this action reached Dr. Whitman in the fall of 1842. A meeting of the missionaries was

[1] This action was probably due to exaggerated reports of the

at once called, and an agreement reached that the missions should not be given up. Moreover, Dr. Whitman asked and received permission from the assembly to return to the East and lay the whole matter before the board in person.

Whitman s famous winter ride, October to April, 1842–1843. Whitman left his station on the Walla Walla October 3, 1842, with a single white companion, Mr. A. L. Lovejoy, expecting to cross the mountains before the snows of winter set in. This he might readily have accomplished had all gone well; but on reaching Fort Hall he learned that the Indians were likely to arrest his progress if he should continue by the direct road, and therefore he turned south, making the long detour by Taos and Bent's Fort. On this journey winter overtook the travellers, violent storms and deep snows impeded their march; while the biting cold, exposure, and lack of proper food would have destroyed any but the most hardy pioneers. At last, early in January, they reached Bent's Fort, where Lovejoy remained till the following summer, while Whitman pushed on to St. Louis and thence to Boston and Washington.

Whitman in the East. We are fortunate in having two accounts of this intrepid missionary when he reached the Atlantic coast.[1] He wore his wilderness

difficulties in Oregon written by one or two men formerly connected with the missions.

[1] One is Horace Greeley's editorial, in the New York *Tribune* (daily) of March 29, 1843; the other a letter to the New York

garb — fur cap, buckskin trousers, and all — to the city of New York and into the office of the great editor, Horace Greeley, who described him, referring to his clothing, as "the roughest man we have seen this many a day." Again, on board the steamboat *Narragansett*, going from New York to Boston, he impressed a traveller as one of the strangest figures that had "ever passed through the Sound since the days of steam navigation"; yet, "that he was every inch a man and no common one was clear." At Boston he succeeded in getting the board to withdraw its order to abandon the southern missions. He wished them to send out a few good families to settle about the stations as supports to the missionaries. At Washington he urged the Secretary of War to establish along the Oregon trail a line of forts and farming stations, which might serve as a protection against the Indians and also furnish emigrants with needed supplies. By the middle of May he was back at Independence, ready to take up the line of march with the great company gathering there. We have already spoken of his important services on the route.

Decline of missions, 1843–1847. Although the Indians welcomed Whitman back in the fall of 1843, with every indication of pleasure at his safe return, yet from this time the missionaries gradually lost their power over the surrounding peoples.[1] Their letters

Spectator, published April 5, 1843. Both are reprinted in the Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society for June, 1903.

[1] Mr. Spalding, indeed, wrote in June, 1843, that "the cause

thenceforth contained many complaints, showing that conditions were becoming more and more disheartening. By the close of the year 1845 it seemed to them that the only thing that could save the missions was the settlement of Christian families in the country, as Whitman had advocated for several years. But such help failed to come, and the lonely workers in this great wilderness were left alone to meet the awful fate which was about to engulf them.

The crisis reached, 1847; causes of hostility. Before the end of the summer of 1847 many of the Cayuses became so surly and insolent that Whitman seems to have thought seriously of abandoning Waiilatpu and removing with his family either to the Dalles or to the Willamette valley. Unfortunately this plan was too long delayed. When the emigrants of that year arrived, many of their children were sick with the measles, a disease which soon spread rapidly among the Indians as well. Dr. Whitman treated both

of religion and of civilization has steadily advanced among this people from the beginning." He declared that at his station twelve Indians were members of the church, and more than fifty had been received on probation; the school, which was exceptionally prosperous, had increased from one hundred to two hundred and thirty-four, chiefs and other great men as well as the children learning to read and to print. Sixty families had each raised over one hundred bushels of grain, and the herds were increasing rapidly. There is scarcely a doubt, however, that so far as the school was concerned, and probably in other respects, Lapwai was at this time the most prosperous of the mission stations, and this report is the most cheering one that we get.

the whites and the Indians; but while the former usually recovered quickly, the latter, on account of their unwholesome mode of life, died off in alarming numbers. It is not surprising that this was so, but it could not be expected that the natives would understand the true reason for it. What they saw was that Whitman was saving the whites and letting their own people perish. Nay, was he not actually causing their death by administering poison instead of the medicine he pretended to be giving them? This suspicion took fast hold upon the minds of the Cayuses, and was the immediate cause of their determination to kill Dr. Whitman as they were accustomed to kill sorcerers in their own tribe, who, as they believed, sometimes caused deaths among them.

The massacre, November 29, 1847. The blow fell on the afternoon of the 29th of November, 1847, when Dr. Whitman, his wife, and seven other persons at the mission were put to death in the most barbarous manner. Five more victims followed within a few days; while half a hundred women and children, largely emigrants who were stopping at the station, were held as captives in one of the mission houses.

Rescue of the prisoners. The Indians supposed that by keeping control of these helpless ones they could save themselves from the vengeance of the white settlers in Oregon; for they gave out word that all captives would be put to death at the first news of war from down the river. Fortunately, before this came,

Peter Skeen Ogden of the Hudson's Bay Company arrived from Vancouver, pushing through at the utmost speed on learning of the massacre, to try to save the captives. It was no easy matter to do this; but by exerting all his influence and authority, Mr. Ogden finally succeeding in ransoming not alone those at Waiilatpu, but the people at the Spalding mission as well — a total of fifty-seven persons. All were taken down the river, finding friends and homes among the settlers of the Willamette valley, where they were soon joined by the missionaries from the northern station.[1]

Declaration of war. When the news of the massacre reached the Willamette valley (December 8), it produced the wildest alarm. No one knew how far this atrocity might be the result of a union among the up-river tribes for the purpose of destroying all of the white people in Oregon. They proposed, however, not to wait till the Indians could reach the valley, but to send a force of men up the river at once. So great was the excitement and enthusiasm that in a single day a company of troops was raised, equipped as well as possible, furnished with a flag made by the women of Oregon City, and hurried forward to the scene of danger. In a short time an entire regiment was provided, by means of which, in the space of a few months, the Cayuses were severely punished, and

[1] A generation after these events took place Jesse Applegate alluded feelingly to this service of Mr. Ogden as "an act of pure mercy and philanthropy, which money could neither hire nor reward."

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they say, "we have almost despaired of receiving its protection; yet we trust that our present situation, when fully laid before you, will at once satisfy your honourable body of the necessity of extending the strong arm of guardianship and protection over this distant, but beautiful portion of the United States' domain. Our relations with the proud and powerful tribes of Indians residing east of the Cascade Mountains, hitherto uniformly amicable and pacific, have recently assumed quite a different character. They have shouted the war whoop, and crimsoned their tomahawks in the blood of our citizens. . . . Circumstances warrant your memorialists in believing that many of the powerful tribes . . . have formed an alliance for the purpose of carrying on hostilities against our settlements. . . . To repel the attacks of so formidable a foe, and protect our families and property from violence and rapine, will require more strength than we possess . . . we have a right to expect your aid, and you are in justice bound to extend it. . . . If it be at all the intention of our honoured parent to spread her guardian wings over her sons and daughters in Oregon, she surely will not refuse to do it now, when they are struggling with all the ills of a weak and temporary government, and when perils are daily thickening around them, and preparing to burst upon their heads. When the ensuing summer's sun shall have dispelled the snow from the mountains, we shall look with glowing hopes and restless anxiety for the coming of your laws and your arms."

The news in Washington. Joe Meek, accompanied

by nine sturdy associates, set out from the headquarters of the army at Waiilatpu on the 4th of March, 1848, and in just sixty-six days reached St. Joseph, Missouri. Six days later (May 17) he arrived at St. Louis, and now the dreadful story of the Whitman massacre was flashed all over the land, producing a feeling of sympathy and anxiety for the Oregon people that nothing in their previous history had been able to excite. Meek went to Washington and laid his dispatches before President Polk. They were at once sent to Congress, together with a message calling on that body to act, and act quickly, in order that troops might be hurried to the defence of Oregon before the end of the summer. Great haste was not possible, for the question of slavery was beginning to overshadow all else, and the strongest passions were aroused on this subject in the course of the debate on the Oregon bill. Yet so much general interest was felt in the safety of Oregon that the measure was finally passed, just before the adjournment of Congress, August 13, after a continuous session of twenty-one hours.

The territory of Oregon; General Lane governor. President Polk signed the bill and appointed General Joseph Lane of Indiana governor of the territory of Oregon. Joe Meek was given the office of United States marshal in the new government. Governor Lane, Meek, and a number of others started for Oregon by way of Santa Fé and California late in August. They succeeded, though with much difficulty, in reaching San Francisco, where the governor and marshal

took ship for the Columbia. They arrived at Oregon City March 2, 1849, and on the following day the new territorial government was proclaimed.[1]

[1] This was the day before Polk's administration came to an end. General Lane acted as governor less than two years, resigning in June, 1850. In 1851 he was elected to represent the territory in Congress, and filled the office until 1859, when he took his seat as one of the United States senators from Oregon. In 1860 he was nominated for Vice-President on the ticket with John C. Breckenridge. He died in 1881.

CHAPTER XIV

THE NORTHWEST AND CALIFORNIA

Conditions in early California. For most Americans the history of the Pacific coast had thus far been summed up in the story of Oregon. The Mexican (until 1821 the Spanish) territory south of the parallel of 42° had sometimes attracted the notice of public men, and once or twice produced some effect upon the government's plans concerning Oregon. But until about 1840 very little attention was paid to this vast province, where four or five thousand people were living in comparative idleness, scattered about through the valleys and over the plains of that fair and sunny land. The principal occupation was the keeping of herds, which required little labour. The "*Boston Ships*," as the American traders were called, plied up and down the long coast line, visiting the harbours and inlets where they exchanged groceries and manufactured goods for the cartloads of beef hides and bags of tallow brought down from the ranches.

Americans settle in California. Sometimes sailors, attracted by the easy life of the Californians, deserted from these vessels and became residents in the country. Other Americans came overland as hunters and trappers, like Jedediah Smith, Ewing Young, and

the Walker party sent out by Captain Bonneville. Many of them remained to marry native women, secure grants of land, and become citizens. After a time the region became pretty well known among the class of frontiersmen who were beginning to go to Oregon, and in 1841 the first emigrant train made its way overland, partly by the Oregon trail, to the Sacramento valley. Thereafter the annual migrations to the far West were usually divided, a portion branching off at Fort Hall to go to California, although Oregon still received by far the larger share.

Captain Sutter and Sutter's Fort. In 1839 Captain John A. Sutter, formerly a soldier in the Swiss army, went to California by way of Oregon, and in 1841 he secured from the Mexican governor eleven square leagues of land in the Sacramento valley. He built a strong fort of adobes on the site of the present city of Sacramento, began raising grain and cattle on a large scale, and also traded with the Indians for furs. Sutter employed a number of Americans upon his estate, and by furnishing supplies to others enabled them to settle in this interior section of California. The fort was on the main emigrant routes from the United States and Oregon, which helped to make it in a few years the centre of the most important American community in the country.

Rumours of war. The Mexican government was not strong during this period even at home, while the great distance to California from the Mexican capital, the difficulties of communication, and the scattered con-

dition of the population made her rule in this province so feeble as to be almost ridiculous. The result was numerous revolutions, in which the Americans usually took part, and such a state of political unrest that men accustomed to a settled and strong government could scarcely be blamed for wishing a change. The interest which the United States already had in Oregon, the continued emigration of her people by sea and land to California, the letters written back by these emigrants, the reports of official visitors and the books of far west travellers produced a feeling that our country must finally become possessed of the southern as well as the northern section of the Pacific coast. After 1836 there was always danger of war between the United States and Mexico over the question of annexing Texas to the Union, thus increasing the feeling of uncertainty respecting California. It was well understood that in case of hostilities this province would doubtless be captured by the American fleet.[1]

The Bear Flag Revolt, June, 1846. By the spring of 1846 there were several hundred Americans scattered through the country, the most numerous body of them in the vicinity of Sutter's Fort. Lieutenant John C. Frémont, the "Pathfinder," with his surveying party, had wintered in California, where he came into conflict with the government authorities. He then

[1] In 1842 Commodore Jones, believing that war had broken out between the two nations, actually took possession of Monterey and hoisted the American flag. He gave up the place a few hours later on learning his mistake.

marched north toward Oregon, but turned back from Klamath Lake on receiving a visit from Gillespie, a secret agent of the United States. The settlers about the fort became convinced from his actions that war had broken out, and some of them decided that it would be the proper thing for them to declare California independent of Mexico. This they did at Sonoma, June 14, 1846, raising the famous lone star flag with the rudely painted figure of a bear upon it (the "Bear Flag").

The war of conquest. Now followed an armed conflict, which might perhaps have been avoided, between the United States and the Californians. Frémont took a prominent part in it, as did also Commodore Stockton of the American fleet. The United States government sent General Kearny to California by way of Santa Fé, and after a few months of fighting the territory came definitely into American hands. When the treaty of peace was signed, February 2, 1848, the conquest was confirmed to us. A military government had already been established, the laws changed somewhat in accordance with American ideas, and a new system of administration substituted for that formerly maintained by Mexico.

The gold discovery. It was expected that these changes would promote the prosperity of California, which might at last hope to become a rival of Oregon upon the Pacific coast.[1] But no one dreamed of the

[1] When the Bear Flag Revolt occurred, Captain Sutter (who was a German Swiss and never mastered the English language

wonderful transformation about to take place. On the 24th of January, ten days before the treaty of peace was signed, James W. Marshall made his world-famous discovery of gold on the American River, some fifty miles above Sutter's Fort. He and Captain Sutter wished to keep the benefits of the find to themselves, but the secret escaped, as great secrets usually do, and in a few weeks the inhabitants of California were hurrying north with shovel and pan, hoping to wash quick fortunes out of the sands brought down from the mysterious Sierras. So great did the "rush" become that at San Francisco and other towns ordinary lines of business were suspended, stores, warehouses, and even printing offices were deserted, and vessels touching at San Francisco had to remain in port because the crews escaped to the mines. Picks, shovels, and pans rose to famine prices.

The news reaches Oregon, August, 1848. Before the summer closed news of the discovery had reached Oregon, producing an excitement scarcely less intense than that caused by the Indian war just ended. Resolutions were instantly taken, plans made, and in a few days a company was on its way southward. Soon a regular tide of travel, on foot, by pack train, and wagon, set in across the Siskiyous. Oregon lost within a single year a very large proportion of its male in-

perfectly) wrote exultantly to a friend, "What for progress will California make now!" The manuscript letter from which this is quoted is in possession of Mr. P. J. Healy of San Francisco, who kindly permitted the writer to examine his collection.

habitants. Some of the most prominent men passed into this new emigration; for example, Peter H. Burnett, soon to become the first governor of the State of California. When General Lane and Joe Meek reached San Francisco on their way northward, they saw numbers of Oregon men, some of whom, leaving the Willamette valley or Puget Sound almost penniless, were already returning to their families with thousands of dollars in gold dust.

The "Forty-niners"; progress of California. The news was carried across the Rockies, and before the arrival of winter hundreds, thousands, on the Atlantic coast were preparing for the voyage to Panama, expecting to cross the Isthmus and take ship to San Francisco. Others in the interior impatiently waited till the grass should start in the spring, when twenty-five thousand persons, in an almost continuous caravan, moved westward to the valley of the Sacramento. But this was only the beginning. Month after month, and year after year, the excited multitudes pressed on to this new El Dorado. All were looking for the golden treasure; but while most men sought it in the river drift, many took the surer methods of carrying supplies to the mines, or of cultivating the soil in order to produce flour, bacon, fruit, and other necessities which during the early years of the gold rush brought such fabulous prices. Hundreds of new occupations were opened, and fortunes made in the most diverse ways. No young western community had ever been advertised

as was California during these years; and few, even of the most prosperous, had grown as rapidly as she.

San Francisco the commercial emporium of the Pacific coast. The mining camps were soon extended so as to embrace a large portion of the territory west of the Sierras; towns like Stockton and Sacramento grew up as interior supply stations; while San Francisco, at the great harbour of California, rose at one bound to be the place of chief importance among Pacific coast seaports. Here was the emporium of all the trade of this rapidly growing population, having relations with the eastern coast, with Mexico, Central and South America, Australia, Hawaii, and in general all countries interested in the trade of the great gold-producing territory which fortune had recently tossed into the lap of the United States. Men from the eastern cities employed their capital and their business skill in building up at San Francisco great commercial establishments, whose influence has been felt throughout the later course of Pacific coast history. They did not confine themselves to California, but came northward to the Columbia River, to Puget Sound, and the smaller harbours along the northwest coast; to the interior districts of the Oregon country, wherever opportunities for profitable commerce were to be found. San Francisco's population of a few hundred in 1848 grew by 1860 to more than 56,000, in another decade it became 150,000, and by 1880 exceeded a quarter of a million.

Change in the course of Pacific coast history.

We cannot follow this wonderful movement in detail, but it is easy to see that the discovery of gold produced startling changes in the relations between the northern and southern sections of the Pacific slope. When the Oregon bill was before Congress in the spring of 1848, some wished to couple with it a bill for a California and a New Mexico territory also; but others declared that the "native-born" territory of Oregon should not be unequally yoked with "territories scarcely a month old, and peopled by Mexicans and half-Indian Californians." Two years after this incident California had a population, mainly American, of 92,000 and was ready for statehood, ten years later she had 380,000, and in another decade more than half a million; while the territory of Oregon which in 1850 included the entire district west of the Rocky Mountains and north of California, had in that year less than 14,000 people. By 1870 the Pacific Northwest, then divided into the state of Oregon and the two territories of Washington and Idaho, had a total population of only 130,000 as against California's 560,000.

California overshadows the Northwest. These facts tell the story of how the natural course of the Pacific coast's development was changed by the magic of gold. The long list of American explorers, traders, and missionaries, whose deeds and sacrifices glorify the early history of the Pacific Northwest, were largely forgotten by a nation entranced with the story of the "Forty-niners." The far-reaching influence of Oregon as the oldest American territory on the Pacific

coast faded quickly from the memories of men. The Oregon Trail was already deep worn through the sand hills along the Platte and Sweetwater, Bear River, and the Portneuf, by the wagons of the Oregon pioneers; it was lined with the crumbling bones of their cattle, and marked by the graves of their dead; yet instantly, after the passage of the thronging multitudes of '49, it became the "California Trail," and to this day most men know it by no other name. California, in a word, so completely overshadowed the Northwest in wealth, in commerce, and in population, that to the people of the country in general this state has seemed to be about all of the Pacific coast.

CHAPTER XV

PROGRESS AND POLITICS, 1849–1859

California's debt to the Northwest. The relations between the Northwest and California were in some respects very close. Those Oregon men who went to the gold mines were seasoned pioneers, who had already partly conquered and civilized one great section of the Pacific coast. They were a valuable element in the new and mixed population that now poured into the southern territory, helping to bring order out of disorder, and to establish an effective government for the new state as they had already done for their own colony. It is of course impossible, as well as unnecessary, to measure California's debt to the Northwest during the early years of the gold rush; but it was undoubtedly very great.

New California helps to create a new Northwest. On the other hand, there is much truth in the claim that the rapid development of California gave an entirely new aspect to life in the Northwest. The first effect of the gold discovery was to draw away one-half or perhaps two-thirds of the able-bodied men of Oregon, and to leave the country with insufficient labour to cultivate the fields already opened. But this was only a temporary drawback. The mines afforded a

wonderful market for everything the northern region could produce. Packers visited the farms, buying up the surplus flour, meat, lard, butter, eggs, vegetables, and fruits. A large number of boats entered the Columbia, ascending to the new village of Portland on the Willamette, where they took on cargoes of provisions as rapidly as these could be collected from up the river. Cargoes of lumber were carried away from the mills already established, and these proving insufficient to meet the demand, others were built and put into operation at various points along the Columbia. Farmers, merchants, labourers, manufacturers, speculators, in fact all classes of settlers in Oregon reaped a magnificent harvest from the filling up of California, and the new wealth of gold. Debts were cancelled, homes improved, and the conditions of life made easier and more pleasant than they had been in the strictly pioneer time; new enterprises of all sorts were started in the Willamette settlement, machinery was imported for the use of the farmer, roads opened, and steamboats placed upon the rivers. The new territorial government, which fortunately came just at the beginning of the new age, was of great benefit to the people in many ways. Among other things it enabled them to make some provision for a system of common schools,[1] and

[1] The pioneers of the Northwest showed commendable enterprise in the establishment of high-grade schools, the earliest of which was the Oregon Institute founded by the Methodist missionaries at Salem in 1841. It afterward grew into the Willamette University. The second was Tualatin Academy, the beginning of Pacific University. Common schools were also main-

to secure for this region a cheaper, more frequent, and regular mail service. Under these circumstances the population increased much more rapidly than formerly; in spite of the glittering attractions of California property rose in value and general prosperity prevailed.

Prosperity of the Puget Sound colony. When the discovery of gold was first reported in the autumn of 1848, there were only a few settlers on Puget Sound, most of whom were engaged in making shingles and getting out timber for the Hudson's Bay Company. This was almost their only means of securing the supplies needed to support their families. About twenty-five of the men immediately set out for the gold mines, leaving a very small remnant of population in the country. In a few months many of them returned with an abundance of money, to be used in making improvements. Samuel Hancock tells us that when he came back to Olympia in the fall of 1849, after spending a year in the mines, "everything bore the impress of prosperity." Among other things a grist mill had been erected, which was of great benefit to the community.

Beginnings of lumbering on Puget Sound. The settlement on Puget Sound received special benefits from the great demand for lumber which came from San Francisco and the other California towns. No portion of the Pacific Northwest was better fitted by nature to supply this need; for here the forests usually came down to the water's edge, while many of the

tained by private subscription before the public school system went into effect.

smaller inlets, some of them excellent harbours for ocean vessels, afforded the very best sites for sawmills. Early in the year 1849 the brig *Orbit* put into Budd's Inlet (Olympia) for a load of piles. This was the beginning of the lumber trade with San Francisco. In a short time mills were running near Olympia (Tumwater), at the mouth of the Dewamish (Seattle), at Steilacoom, Cape Flattery, New Dungeness, Port Townsend and other places. With lumber selling at sixty dollars per thousand feet, as it did for a time, the business was immensely profitable.

The discovery of coal. Aside from lumber the California communities were in great need of fuel, and the people of San Francisco made anxious inquiries about the possibility of getting coal near the harbours of the northwest coast. An inferior quality of coal had been found north of the Columbia before 1850. In 1851 Samuel Hancock began searching near Puget Sound, and with the help of the natives found what seemed to be an important deposit of this useful mineral. Other discoveries were made at later times on Bellingham Bay, near Seattle, and at other points all convenient to good harbours. Some of these were soon worked, with the result that thousands of tons of coal were shipped to San Francisco annually. All of these things brought about a very prosperous condition in the little colony.

Increase in population. Since the country south of the Columbia had been settling up for a comparatively long time, the lands there had been pretty carefully

picked over; and this fact, together with the commercial advantages of Puget Sound, caused some of the emigrants of these years to go northward in search of homes. The lumber mills gave employment, while the explorations in search of coal, and for other purposes, were bringing to light new farming lands in the rich valleys back from the Sound, where the settlers now began to take claims. But for several years little progress was made in agriculture, flour and seed grain actually being imported from San Francisco at great expense in exchange for a portion of the lumber sent down. The census of 1850 gives 1111 as the total population north of the Columbia. Three years later a special enumeration showed 3965. In that year, for the first time, Puget Sound drew a considerable part of the emigration to the Northwest, thirty-five wagons crossing the Cascades by a new road which the northern settlers had opened from the Yakima River to Olympia.

Agitation for a territorial government. The people about Puget Sound found themselves completely separated from those on the Willamette, and living as it were in a world of their own. This was due largely to the difficulty of communication between the Columbia River and the Sound. The feeling was strengthened by the fact that all the regular trade of this section was with San Francisco. Since their situation rendered them independent of the Columbia River commercially, they came to believe that their country should also have a separate government. Agitation

for dividing the territory began in 1851, and the next year matters were brought to a head. In September, 1852, a newspaper called the *Columbian*[1] was begun at Olympia for the purpose of advocating the project, and one month later (October 27) a meeting was held which determined on choosing delegates to a convention. This was to decide whether or not to ask Congress to erect the district north and west of the Columbia into a territorial government. Although some of the people living along the river, to whom Oregon City was more convenient than Olympia, objected to the plan, the proposed meeting was held on the 25th of November, and a memorial asking for the change sent to General Lane, who then represented the territory in Congress. On the 15th of January, 1853, the Oregon legislature, sympathizing with the demand of the northern settlements, adopted a similar memorial; but before this reached him Lane had introduced a bill for creating the territory of Columbia. It passed on the 10th of February, 1853, with the name *Washington* substituted for *Columbia,* a change with which the people of the new territory were very well satisfied. General Isaac I. Stevens, who had been commissioned to survey a northern route for a Pacific railroad, was appointed

[1] Files of this paper, from September, 1852, to December, 1853, the entire period of its existence, as well as complete files of the *Pioneer and Democrat,* and the *Puget Sound Herald,* were consulted in the private library of Hon. C. B. Bagley of Seattle. The writer also obtained from Mr. Bagley the loan of his files of the *Washington Statesman,* Walla Walla, which proved invaluable for the study of the early history of the "Inland Empire."

governor. He arrived at Olympia on the 26th of November, 1853, and the new organization was put in operation.[1]

Beginnings of settlement in southern Oregon. As the gold discovery promoted the prosperity of the Willamette valley and Puget Sound, so it led also to the planting of new communities in other favourable districts of the Northwest. The region known as southern Oregon contains the two important valleys of the Umpqua and Rogue rivers. It had already become known to the pioneers, partly through explorations for a southern emigrant road made in 1846 under the direction of Jesse Applegate. A portion of the emigration of that and the following years came to the Willamette over this route; and when Oregon men began going to the gold mines of California, the country became still better known. Wagons and pack trains, men on foot and on horseback, were continually passing back and forth; so that it was not long before a few individuals, impressed with the beauty of the landscape, the excellence of the grass and water, and the

[1] General Stevens was a trained soldier and engineer, a graduate of West Point. His success in finding a practicable line for a railroad immediately gave him great influence with the people of Washington, who believed thoroughly in the future of their section. He served as governor till 1857, was then elected delegate to Congress from the territory, remaining in that position till the breaking out of the Civil War, when he went to the field of action. He was killed while gallantly leading his division at Chantilly. The "Life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens," by Hazard Stevens, 2 vols., Boston, 1900, gives a full account of his services and much valuable matter on the history of the Northwest.

opportunities for farming and stock raising, began to think of locating claims in these valleys.

The Umpqua valley. Jesse Applegate, who was the most noted explorer of southern Oregon, was himself led to settle in Umpqua valley.[1] In the spring of 1850, he with a number of others organized a company to take up lands and establish town sites. It happened that while these pioneers were making their way down toward the sea, they met a party of Californians who had entered the Umpqua by ship for the same purpose. The two companies thus accidentally brought together formed a new association which undertook to colonize the Umpqua valley. Settlers and miners quickly overran the region. The county of Umpqua, embracing the whole of southern Oregon, was created by the territorial legislature in 1851.

Rogue River and the southern coast. The valley of Rogue River received settlers about the same time, and here the influence of gold discoveries was strongly felt. California miners had already prospected the Sierras to the borders of the Oregon country; and just at the close of the year 1851 rich placer mines were discovered on Jackson Creek, a branch of Rogue River. A new rush began, Californians and Oregonians both taking part in it, so that in a very short time the village of Jacksonville had a population of several hundred, and a number of other mining centres were established

[1] He founded and named the town Yoncalla, which became his home. General Lane also took a claim in this valley, near the town of Roseburg, and spent his declining years in retirement.

in the same neighbourhood. Settlers pushed in at the same time to take up the fertile lands along the Rogue River and its branches. While these things were going forward in the upper portions of the valleys of southern Oregon, settlements were also begun near the mouths of the rivers, especially at Port Orford and about Coos Bay. The discovery of coal near Coos Bay gave it a large trade with San Francisco. The various centres of population were connected with one another by means of mountain roads and trails; the interest in gold mining stimulated emigration, and a population of several thousand people was soon to be found within this territory, which at the beginning of the California gold rush was an absolute wilderness, occupied by native barbarians.

Indian outbreaks; the Rogue River War. When the early missionaries and settlers came to Oregon they found the Indians under the control of the Hudson's Bay Fur Company, whose officers were able to secure for the whites such lands and other privileges as the Indians had to bestow. The company was very successful in preventing conflicts between the two races. Only rarely were the settlers molested by the natives during these years, the most notable exception being the Whitman massacre in 1847. When the United States took control, in 1849, the situation had become more difficult to handle. Settlers were by this time becoming numerous; the Indians had begun to fear for the safety of their lands, and they were not yet convinced of the national government's power. Soon afterward

troubles began, especially in the newly occupied territory of southern Oregon, where miners and travellers were occasionally murdered, and settlers driven from their lands. In some cases, it must be confessed, the whites were to blame as well as the red men. But the time soon came when the tribes of southern Oregon were ready to go on the war path, and then hundreds of innocent persons suffered the untold horrors which have always marked such savage outbreaks. Men were shot down on the highway or in the field; at dead of night unprotected families were besieged in their cabins, the men killed outright, the women and children enslaved, and homes burned to the ground; sometimes whole settlements were either massacred or driven away. This war, usually called, from the most terrible of the tribes concerned in it, the Rogue River War, began in 1851. It lasted, with some intermissions, till 1856, when the Indians, being removed to reservations, the settlers were at last secure in the possession of their homes.[1]

Other Indian wars. Southern Oregon was not the only section of the Northwest to suffer from the uprising of the natives during this period. On Puget Sound, too, the Indians began to murder white men as early as 1850, though no general outbreak occurred until several years later. In 1854–1855 General Stevens, as superintendent of Indian affairs, made treaties with

[1] In this war General Lane performed most important services for Oregon, both as warrior and peacemaker. The Indians stood in great awe of him.

nearly all of the tribes both in eastern and western Washington, and it was supposed that these would put an end to all conflict between the two races. But as a matter of fact the natives, seeing the country filling up with white people, were about ready for a general war in defence of what they considered to be their own country. The situation here was not different from that which brought on the great Indian wars in other sections of the United States. Just as New England had its King Philip's War, and the middle West its struggles with Tecumseh and Black Hawk, so the people of the Pacific Northwest, when settlement threatened to crowd the Indians off their lands, were forced to meet great combinations of native tribes under Chief John, Leschi, Kamiakin, and others. Except in southern Oregon, these wars came mainly in the years 1855–1858. They included many harrowing incidents, like the murder of the settlers in White River valley near Puget Sound, the daring attack upon the little village of Seattle in the spring of 1856, the slaughter of the emigrants on the Malheur River, and massacres at the Cascades. The United States government maintained troops at various places throughout the Northwest, and in some cases these rendered effective service during the Indian war; but their numbers were too small to meet the great emergency, while difficulties arose between the territorial officers and the military commanders that caused the burden of the war to fall mainly upon the people themselves. Volunteer companies were called into the field, who with some severe fighting

and much attendant hardship were able to bring this distressing period to a close. The Indians here as elsewhere found it necessary to accept the bounty of Congress in the shape of a reservation, with pay for the lands which they gave up to the government. Most of the treaties went into effect in 1859.

The Oregon constitutional convention, August to September, 1857. Several years prior to the close of the Indian wars, the question of statehood for Oregon began to be seriously discussed, and in 1856 a bill for admitting the territory into the Union was introduced in Congress by General Lane. Though this failed, another bill passed the House at the next session, authorizing the people to frame a state constitution. It did not pass the Senate, but the legislature of Oregon Territory had already provided for submitting the question of holding a convention to the voters at the June (1857) election. It was carried by a large majority, delegates were chosen from the several counties, and on the third Monday in August the convention met in the town of Salem. September 18 a state constitution was adopted, which being submitted to the people was ratified by a vote of 7195 in favor to 3195 against. The state government went into operation in July, 1858, although Oregon was not formally admitted to the Union till the 14th of February, 1859.[1]

[1] The population of Oregon in 1860 was 52,465, and of Washington Territory, 11,594.

CHAPTER XVI

THE INLAND EMPIRE

Extent and character of the Inland Empire. The Indian wars of the Pacific Northwest, like those of New England, western New York, and various sections of the Mississippi valley, were followed by a period in which population spread rapidly over previously unoccupied territory. Thus far settlement had been practically confined to the region between the Cascade Mountains and the Pacific, including the Willamette valley, Puget Sound, the Cowlitz and Columbia districts, the valleys of southern Oregon, and a few points near the seacoast. This was only a small part of the Oregon country, the eastern section, from the Cascades to the Rockies, containing more than three times as large an area. Above the point where the Columbia breaks through the Cascades, one hundred and ninety miles from the sea, it receives branches from the north whose sources lie far beyond the American boundary of 49°, others from the south rising below the 42d parallel, and still others from every part of the west slope of the Rockies between these two boundary lines. They drain an American territory embracing about two hundred thousand square miles, nearly one-fourth larger than the combined areas of the New

England states, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. A portion of it is occupied by the forested ranges of the Bitter Root and Blue mountains; but in general it is a region of great plains and elevated plateaus, relieved by wooded valleys and gently sloping hills. The climate, soil, and productions, all vary greatly from those of western Oregon, and the natives were superior to the western Indians in intellect as well as in strength, energy, and warlike valour.

Its agricultural possibilities begin to be understood. Owing to the light rainfall over the greater portion of the Inland Empire, some early travellers pronounced the entire region unfit to be the home of civilized man. But the missionaries proved that the natural grasses afforded excellent pasturage for cattle and sheep,[1] and that the soil in many places would produce bounteous crops of grain and vegetables even without irrigation, while with an artificial supply of water surprising results could be obtained. Several of the valleys, like Walla Walla and the Grand Ronde, which lay in the path of the emigrants to Oregon, attracted the attention of the pioneers at an early time by the evident fertility of their lands; and as early as 1847 it seemed certain that the first of these would soon be occupied by farmers. But the Whitman massacre of that year destroyed these prospects, and an-

[1] Dr. Whitman wrote in October, 1847, just before his death: "The interior of Oregon is unrivalled by any country for the grazing of stock, of which sheep is the best. This interior will now be sought after."

other decade was to pass away before plans of settlement could be resumed. In the meantime other sections of the Inland Empire were beginning to receive attention on account of the rich farming lands they were supposed to contain.

General Stevens's observations. When General Stevens reached Olympia, in November, 1853, after completing the survey of the northern railroad route, he declared to the people of Puget Sound that there were several great stretches of territory in eastern Washington which invited settlement. "I can speak advisedly," he says, "of the beautiful St. Mary's valley just west of the Rocky Mountains and stretching across the whole breadth of the territory; of the plain fifty miles wide bordering the south bank of the Spokane River; of the valley extending from Spokane River to Colville; of the Cœur d'Alene Prairie of six hundred square miles; the Walla Walla valley. The Nez Percés country is said to be rich as well as the country bordering on the Yakima River."

The Indian war prevents settlement. His treaties with the native tribes soon afterward were expected to throw some of these tracts open, and other treaties made about the same time with the Indians of eastern Oregon looked to the settlement of portions of that country. But when the Indians went on the war path in 1855 this entire region, except a small district protected by the military post at the Dalles, was once more closed to the peaceful tiller of the soil. The prairies and open river valleys, instead of being dotted over

with settlers' cabins or the white-sheeted wagons of emigrants, were traversed in all directions by files of marching men, and troops of gallant cavalry. Yet this only served to make the whole country more familiar to the people of western Oregon and Washington, and to increase the desire to settle there as soon as the Indian troubles should be over.

Gold hunting east of the Cascades. By this time (1859) there was an additional motive for emigration to the Inland Empire. Even before the Indian war there had been more or less prospecting for gold in the eastern country, and in 1855 discoveries were made at Colville, though at that time little could be done with them. In the years 1857–1858 occurred a rush to Fraser River in British Columbia. For a time it was supposed this region would prove very rich; but soon disappointments crowded upon the Americans who had gone there, and a great outpouring took place. The men who left these mines spread over and prospected large sections of the eastern country, with results only less wonderful than those obtained in California ten years earlier. Rich gold districts were opened near Colville; on the Clearwater, Salmon River, Boise River, John Day's River, Burnt River, Powder River; the Owyhee, Kootenai, Deer Lodge, Beaverhead; the Prickly Pear, and other places. Californians streamed northward as Oregonians had gone south in '48 and '49. Mining camps grew in a few months to towns of several thousand people, and sometimes disappeared quite as rapidly, when richer diggings were opened else-

where, or water for gold washing failed. By rapid stages the prospectors passed up the several branches of the Columbia, until they stood once more upon the summit of the Rockies, this time coming from the west. At South Pass, Helena, and many other camps, they met and mingled with the crowds of gold seekers arriving from the East. These were "tenderfeet" to the rugged men who had spent twelve or fifteen years in the mining districts of California, British Columbia, eastern Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, and who rather gloried in the name "yonder siders," applied to them by the other class.

Carrying supplies to the mining camps. When the miners turned toward the northeast the pack trains headed in the same direction, carrying the eager gold seekers with their outfits, and following from camp to camp with regular supplies of bacon and flour, picks, shovels, pans, quicksilver, and other necessities of the business. From ten to fifty horses or mules usually made up the train, though sometimes more than one hundred animals were employed. They were loaded with packs varying from two hundred to four hundred pounds. At first many of these trains set out from the Willamette valley directly, crossing the Cascade Mountains; but in a very short time (as early as 1862) the Oregon Steam Navigation Company, with headquarters at Portland, made arrangements for carrying goods up the river as far as old Fort Walla Walla, then as now called Wallula. Intermediate points were The Dalles and Umatilla Landing.

Walla Walla a great distributing centre. **At Walla Walla, located a few miles above the site of the Whitman mission, a military post had been established in 1856, which soon drew about it a small settlement. This place now became the distributing centre for a mining region embracing nearly the whole of the eastern country. The Dalles sent goods up the John Day valley; Umatilla carried to Powder River, Owyhee, Boise Basin, and a few other places in eastern Oregon and southern Idaho; but Walla Walla sent its pack trains not only to most of these camps, but to Colville,** Kootenai, the Salmon and the Clearwater, the Prickly Pear and the upper Missouri. The trails radiated in all directions from this little town, and during the packing season long lines of horses and mules were ever coming and going. In winter the feeding yards of the valley were filled with poor, worn creatures, whose scarred backs and ugly girth marks proved the class to which they belonged.[1] The packers themselves were an important social element in Walla Walla and Wallula. Sometimes they gave grand balls which the entire community would attend. Many of them were enterprising young men who have since made themselves felt in business and professional life.

The Montana trade by steamboat and wagon.

[1] The number of pack animals maintained in the valley is almost incredible. In the winter of 1866-1867 between five hundred and six hundred were kept within seven miles of Wallula. During ten days in the month of July, 1869, when times were dull, trains aggregating five hundred and fifty-nine packs were fitted out at Walla Walla.

The Columbia River, though affording with its branches over two thousand miles of navigable water, is divided into sections by frequent natural obstructions like the Cascades, Dalles, Great Falls, and Priest's Rapids. As the interior trade grew, the navigation company built boats on section after section, until it became possible to go from Portland to Lake Pend d'Oreille on the North Fork almost wholly by water. This development resulted in part from the opening of trade with the Rocky Mountain country. Active mining operations began in what is now Montana, but then eastern Washington and western Dakota, in 1862. The earliest diggings were located west of the Rockies, but soon rich discoveries were made east of the mountains also. Packers from Walla Walla crossed over at once, carrying hundreds of tons of supplies at very great expense. A military road, from Fort Benton on the upper Missouri to Walla Walla, had been constructed between the years 1859 and 1862, under the direction of Captain John Mullan. It was always passable for pack trains, but soon fell into such a state of disrepair that loaded wagons could not safely pass over it. Soon the demand became loud for the reopening of this highway. Work was done upon it at various times, with the result that many wagons, drawn by six or eight pairs of mules, carried flour and bacon, produced in the Willamette valley, from the head of navigation on the Columbia to Helena on the Missouri, a distance of only about six hundred miles.

Competition between East and West; rapid

growth of Portland. Pacific coast commodities now came into competition with those brought from St. Louis in many little steamboats; and thus the predictions of Mr. Floyd were in a way fulfilled: a commercial route had been opened across the continent *by steamboat and wagon.* The city of Portland, as the western emporium of this trade with the Inland Empire and Montana, entered upon a period of rapid and substantial growth, which has continued almost unbroken to the present time.

Agriculture in the Walla Walla valley. From the beginning of this migration toward the interior, the most favourable portions of the country were eagerly sought after by those wishing to engage in agriculture or stock raising. The rapid progress of mining stimulated this movement, so that in spite of the long delay in beginning the settlement of the Inland Empire, a farming population finally spread over its fertile valleys and plains much more rapidly than would have been the case if no gold rush had occurred. The first district to be occupied was the Walla Walla valley, where the presence of the United States military post afforded a home market for products, and where the lands were not only fertile but easily tilled, comparatively well watered, and conveniently near to the Columbia River and the lower settlements. It will be remembered that this valley was about to be occupied in 1847, when the Whitman massacre suddenly drove all whites west of the Cascades. A few pioneers held claims there at the outbreak of the later Indian war,

and these had to be abandoned also. When the treaties were completed in 1859, many persons were ready to take up lands in the country, while the emigration of that year furnished several hundred settlers.[1] In 1860 Walla Walla County had 1300 white people, and within the next six years the government surveyed about 750,000 acres of land in the valley, most of which was immediately taken up for agricultural purposes. The chief crop was wheat, which yielded at the rate of forty to fifty bushels, and was turned into flour for export to the numerous mining camps supplied from this centre. In 1865 the amount thus sent out was 7000 barrels. At the same time other products, like hay, onions, potatoes, and wool, were shipped down the river. In 1870 Walla Walla County had 5174 inhabitants. By that time the valley was fairly well settled, containing many beautiful farms, with comfortable and even handsome dwellings, surrounded by gardens, fruit orchards, and ornamental trees.

Settlement of the Grand Ronde valley. For many years the emigrants to Oregon had passed with regret the beautiful valley of the Grand Ronde, nestled so peacefully among the Blue Mountains. After all danger from the natives had been removed, and the Walla Walla country partly filled up, settlers began to take claims in this attractive region, notwithstanding

[1] The Olympia *Pioneer and Democrat* of September 30, 1859, says that eight hundred emigrants had settled in the Walla Walla valley, while twenty families had taken claims on the Yakima, and thirty on the Klickitat and through the country from the Dalles to Fort Simcoe (on the Yakima).

its distance from the sea. A few were left there by the emigration of 1861, but it was the great company of 1862 which finally occupied the country. About two thousand, so the newspapers of the time declare, remained in the valley, while the rest, some eight thousand, went down the Columbia. The first winter was one of great privations; but the next summer a crop was raised on the newly broken lands, which furnished an abundance of provisions. La Grande was the principal town, and soon became the county seat of Union County, which included the Grand Ronde within its boundaries. From the first it was a place of considerable importance, being the supply centre for the valley until other towns, like Union, Summerville, and Oro Dell, divided the territory with her. A wagon road built in 1863 connected the Grand Ronde valley with Walla Walla for trading purposes, while other roads and trails made it possible for this upper settlement to send its products to the mines of Boise valley, Owyhee, and other places. The abundance of timber on the slopes of the Blue Mountains, and the fine water power of the mountain streams, promoted the building of sawmills, of which there were four in 1864. A description of the valley, written in the spring of 1868, indicates that excellent progress had been made in the first five years after settlement began. "The waste prairie has changed to fenced and cultivated farms, and in all directions the handiwork of intelligence and industry is visible. Comfortable houses and outhouses have been built, orchards planted; from the poor emigrant has

sprung the well-to-do farmer." County roads crossed the valley in all directions, while two good toll roads had been built through it. The population of Union County in 1870 was 2552.

Other agricultural settlements. These two illustrations of the Walla Walla and Grand Ronde valleys are sufficient to show how population spread over the fine farming districts of the Inland Empire during the years immediately following the gold rush to this region. Many other districts had a similar history. Boise valley, Powder River, the Clearwater and Spokane, the high valleys of western Montana,— all had their farming communities, producing such supplies as the mining districts could use. The Yakima valley east of the Columbia was situated much like the Walla Walla, and was settled about the same time. By 1870 the amount of produce seeking a market from the upper Columbia was already larger than the demand to be supplied in that country, although only a small fraction of the tillable lands had as yet been taken up. The people needed better means of transportation, in order that they might ship their wheat and flour down the river to a larger and more stable market. The entire inland country waited impatiently for railroads to connect its scattered communities, and to afford the much-desired outlet to the sea.[1]

[1] A short line of railroad, from Walla Walla to Wallula, was first projected as early as 1862; but it was not until 1868 that active work was begun upon it. The road was completed in 1874, largely through the energy and financial enterprise of Dr. D. S. Baker. It was the first railroad in the territory of Washington.

velopment of wealth which would follow as a consequence.

Mr. Whitney had observed the liberality with which Congress granted lands to aid canal construction in some of the states and saw no reason why a policy even more liberal might not be pursued in the case of a railroad extending through national territory which without transportation facilities would not be likely to settle up for many years. An adequate land grant being secured along the proposed railway line, he could finance the construction of the road by selling the lands nearest the line as the building proceeded. He appears to have thought that settlers could be tolled along section after section of the road, as these sections were completed, and thus business for the road would be created as fast as the rails could be laid down. In this expectation Mr. Whitney was ignoring the lessons taught by the history of American expansion. This proves that tongues of settlement will never penetrate indefinitely into the wilderness, even along water courses affording free transportation facilities. Expansion has been a mass movement as well as an individual movement.

Whitney desired a land grant. Whitney asked the government to grant him a belt of land sixty miles wide, from Lake Michigan to the mouth of the Columbia River, or to Puget Sound, whichever route for the railroad should be finally decided upon. He launched his scheme as early as 1843 and made a very active campaign for his land grant.

He issued pamphlets, solicited favourable resolutions from commercial bodies, state legislatures, etc., and made a vigorous convass at Washington. "If I can get the grant of lands," said Whitney, "I can build the road. In a few months after the grant the work shall be commenced and far sooner than I had dared to hope it can be completed, when we shall have the whole world tributary to us — when the commerce of the whole would shall be tumbled into our lap."

In the summer of 1845 Whitney visited the great plains country and was more than ever convinced of the feasibility of his plan. But it does not appear that he made even a casual survey of the proposed route from the Missouri westward. All this, as well as the construction of the road, was left to be done after Congress should pass the land grant bill. For this he pressed with redoubled energy in 1845, being especially anxious to secure it before Wisconsin and Iowa territories should become states, which he foresaw would complicate his problem.

Objections to the Plan; Stephen A. Douglas. Whitney's project encountered several obstacles. For one thing, Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois, who was chairman of the Committee on Territories of the House of Representatives, had a railroad plan of his own which differed materially from that of Mr. Whitney. Douglas proposed to organize at once two new territories, Oregon and Nebraska, which, with Iowa territory, would contain the railway route from the Mississippi to the Pacific. He would then grant to

each of the three territories alternate sections of land for a reasonable distance on each side of the proposed road on the distinct condition that the proceeds from the sale of these lands should be devoted to the construction of the road. The work might then be carried on either as a public venture, or let out to private parties as the states concerned should determine.

George Wilkes and his proposed Government Railway. Second, when Whitney's scheme came before Congress it was severely criticised by Mr. George Wilkes of New York, especially in a pamphlet issued early in 1845 under the title "A History of Oregon." Wilkes pronounced Whitney's plan a scheme to rob the government of its western lands for the benefit of the promoter and his associates. He pointed out that, since Whitney proposed to sell government lands to procure funds for building his road, to grant the lands to him would be equivalent to presenting him with the desired railroad — a gift of unexampled munificence. But that was not all. The money for building the road would be secured from the sale of only a portion of the lands demanded. The balance of the lands would remain in the hands of Mr. Whitney's company to enrich them in a yet more fabulous manner.

Wilkes presented to Congress the obvious alternative in the suggestion that the government sell its own lands and build its own railroad out of the proceeds of such land sales. He believed it feasible by this means to construct the road within a reasonable time and without in any way burdening the government. He

proposed to carry the road across the Rocky Mountains by the route the emigrating parties were taking, through South Pass, to the Columbia. From the Columbia, near its junction with Snake River, the road was to cross the Cascades to Puget Sound. Whitney had proposed either the mouth of the Columbia or Puget Sound as the terminus of his road, though his views were sufficiently elastic to allow him to substitute San Francisco Bay should such a course prove more agreeable to Congress.

The rival plans of Whitney and Wilkes were pressed with so much zeal, and divided support so evenly, that neither plan was able to command the approval of Congress. However, the contest provoked a vast amount of railway discussion, it called out resolutions of state and territorial legislatures, and it led directly to the holding of railway conventions which fed the rising flame of public interest and served to focus attention more and more upon the practical aspects of the problem.

Connection with Frémont's third journey. In my opinion, this discussion probably constituted one reason for the government's action in sending Lieutenant John C. Frémont west on a new exploring expedition in the summer of 1845. He crossed from the upper Arkansas through the then Mexican territory lying south of the forty-second parallel, and emerged at Sutter's Fort on the Sacramento. In his further efforts to carry out his explorations he encountered the hostility of the Mexican officials in California and

finally joined the party of revolution which overthrew the Mexican rule there. Frémont later testified that his mission was to survey for a railroad to San Francisco Bay, and on that theory alone can his movements be fully explained.

In any event, it was now seen that logically the first step in securing a Pacific railroad was not a land grant but a careful preliminary survey to determine the best line for such a work; and the government's engineering service was amply equipped for making such a survey or surveys. Accordingly, Congress was appealed to in this matter, and on the 3rd of March, 1853, the law was passed which provided for the great Pacific Railroad Surveys. All promising routes were to be investigated — such as the route made familiar through the journey of Lewis and Clark, the routes of Pike, Long, and Frémont, and those reported on by officers connected with the military campaigns in New Mexico and California. The Secretary of War was to direct the surveys and a large measure of discretion was necessarily reserved to him.

The Pacific railway surveys. Secretary Jefferson Davis caused to be examined four routes from the Mississippi to the Pacific. One was a northern route, two central and one southern. The northern route ran near the head of the Missouri, one of the two central routes ran near the forty-second parallel (the South Pass route), the other some three or four degrees further south. The southern route was near the thirty-second parallel.

The northern survey was placed in charge of Major (afterwards General) Isaac Ingalls Stevens, who about this time was appointed governor of the newly created Territory of Washington. Colonel J. C. Frémont, Captain Stansbury and Lieutenant Beckwith surveyed the South Pass route. Captain Gunnison was given the south central route, while Captain John Pope, Lieutenant Parke, Major Emory and Lieutenant Williamson took the southern, which included surveys from the Colorado River to San Francisco Bay.

Three practicable routes revealed. The great work, whose results are embodied in a magnificent series of volumes, was completed in about two years. It showed the practicability of three routes, the northern, the southern and the one by South Pass, which thereafter was usually called the Central route. It rested with the Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis, to determine which of the three feasible routes possessed the most marked advantages as to length, economy of construction, etc., and he very naturally decided in favour of the southern. "Not only," said Davis, "is this the shortest and least costly route to the Pacific, but it is the shortest and cheapest route to San Francisco, the greatest commercial city on our western coast."

The Union Pacific Company formed. A location contest now ensued in which Davis was charged by General Stevens with unfair discrimination against the northern route. Stevens advocated the construction of three lines of road, the Northern,

Central, and Southern Pacific Railways. The Pacific railroad became a sectional issue between the North and the Cotton South so that at no time prior to the outbreak of the Civil War was it possible to obtain legislation establishing such a road.

When the Lower South seceded and the Union was temporarily contracted, the time seemed ripe for Congressional action, especially since a railway was needed to bind the far western communities to the Union as well as for defence against the Indians. On July 1, 1862, President Lincoln signed a bill "to aid in the construction of a railroad and telegraph line from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean, and to secure to the Government the use of the same for postal, military, and other purposes." The Union Pacific Railway Company, with a capital stock of $100,000,000, was organized to build the road. The company was to receive five alternate sections of land on each side of its right of way, and an additional subsidy in the form of $16,000 of United States bonds, bearing six per cent interest, for every mile of road constructed. Later modifications of these terms made them still more advantageous to the company.

The Central Pacific. A second company, called the Central Pacific Company, which ultimately constructed a large proportion of the total mileage, had its origin in California. Railroad agitation there had been persistent and almost continuous since 1850. A number of projects were broached which proved unsuccessful, yet with characteristic optimism the peo-

ple continued to hope and to plan for a transcontinental line. The Panama Railway, completed in the early Fifties, although calculated to aid in the development of California, proved inadequate from many points of view, partly because of the length, tediousness and expensiveness of the route. For the improvement of the mail service the "Pony Express" had been organized, which connected with the telegraph line of the Missouri frontier and made the cities of Denver, Salt Lake and San Francisco. This was followed by the Overland Stage Line, covering similar routes. The stage company built several excellent roads over the Sierras and these became serviceable for freighting goods into Nevada, Utah, Idaho, and other mining regions.

But all of this development was merely prophetic of the railway, and in 1861 the Central Pacific Railroad Company was organized by Stanford, Huntington, Hopkins, and Judah. The company at the outset intended to build from Sacramento through the Sierras. Finally, through a successful appeal to Congress, they were granted terms similar to those of the Union Pacific Company, and were encouraged to build eastward until they should meet the construction parties of the Union Pacific.

A railroad building. Congress, in fact, by its overliberal subsidies in land and bonds, had provided the incentive for a construction contest such as the world had not yet seen. Each of the two roads, one starting from Sacramento, the other from Omaha,

wished to cover as many miles as possible because each mile of rails laid down meant ten square miles of land and $16,000 of bonds. The western company started first, breaking ground February 22, 1863, and before the close of the year 1867 its line projected east of the Sierras. The Union Pacific delayed until 1865, but the nature of the ground enabled it to build westward from Omaha at a high rate of speed which however could not be maintained on reaching the Rocky Mountains. Meantime the Central Pacific, having overcome its chief geographical obstacles early in the work, and being fortunate in its control of a steady and adequate supply of Chinese coolie labour, gained in speed from year to year so that, instead of meeting the Union Pacific in the foothills of the Sierras as the latter expected, the two companies actually met at Promontory Point, Utah, where the ceremony of "Driving the Golden Spike" occurred on May 10, 1869, in the presence of throngs of visitors from both coasts and from many interior points. From Sacramento the road was extended to San Francisco Bay, which was the real terminus in the west.

A railroad for Oregon. To have an overland railway, like the Central Railway, meant much in every way to the Pacific Northwest, although its benefits to that region fell correspondingly far below those conferred upon the more fortunate south. The line only touched the Oregon country at the southeast corner and did not furnish direct service

to any portion of its people. There was need for other lines, some of which might perhaps connect with the Central, such as a line from the Sacramento north to the Willamette and one by the old emigrant trail from Fort Hall to the Columbia.

California parties had projected a railway northward from the Sacramento at an early day, but construction finally was begun at Portland, Oregon, in April, 1868, when ground was broken for two roads, one to run on the east side of the Willamette River, the other on the west side. The east side railway — The Oregon and California — was completed to Roseburg in the Umpqua valley during the year 1873. From that point south to the upper Sacramento the Oregon and California stage covered the difficult section through the Siskiyous until 1887, when the railway was completed and the isolated valleys of Southern Oregon were brought into close relations with the Willamette and the Columbia.

Entrance of Henry Villard. It was the Oregon and California Railway whose financial problems brought to the North Pacific that great organizing genius, Henry Villard. Once interested in the railway development of the region, Mr. Villard undertook, as an initial project, the opening of a complete system of railways along the Columbia, on the south bank, to connect Portland with The Dalles and the Inland Empire. In the early days of the gold rush to the Inland Empire, as we have seen, Portland business men and financiers had organized the Oregon

Steam Navigation Company, to build and operate boats on the successive reaches of the Columbia River divided from one another by portages. Around the principal portages, like the Cascades and the Dalles to Celilo Falls, this company had built railways and these were the earliest railways in Oregon. Villard organized, with these men, a new company called the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company, which absorbed the Portage railways and other properties of the Navigation Company, and constructed a continuous line from Portland eastward to Baker City in Powder River Valley. Afterwards this road was continued, practically on the line of the old emigrant route, to Granger, Wyoming, where it connected with the Union Pacific.

Villard saves the Northern Pacific Railroad. Villard, meantime, was called upon to save the Northern Pacific Railway which had encountered great financial difficulties and, after a period of intense building activity, this line was completed in September, 1883, giving the Northwest at last a direct line of rail communication with the Mississippi Valley and the East. The celebration of the event, September 8, 1883, when Mr. Villard drove the last spike at a place in Western Montana, was similar to the Driving of the Golden Spike on the Union Pacific at Promontory Point, Utah, fourteen years earlier. Throngs of visitors from both sides of the continent had been gathered there and were being cared for as guests of the company. A number of distinguished Europeans were

among the number. One of the speakers of the occasion was a man who had made the overland journey across the plains with ox teams in 1843 — Senator James W. Nesmith, of Oregon.

The year 1883 is a turning point in the railroad history of the Pacific Northwest. Within the next few years, as we have seen, the Oregon and California Railway surmounted the difficulties of the Siskiyou, connecting thus with California and by the Central Pacific with the East; and the Columbia River line was extended eastward through Oregon, Idaho, and a portion of Wyoming (the old Oregon Trail) to connect with the Central Pacific directly.

A new railway era opens in 1883. In 1893 the Great Northern Railway was completed to Puget Sound, making the third transcontinental line to be built. It marks the entrance into the transportation life of the Northwest of Mr. James J. Hill, as the California road and the Northern Pacific marked the entrance of Mr. Villard. Mr. Hill's work during the succeeding years produced many changes in the railroad map of the region, particularly in the states of Montana, Idaho, and Washington. The most notable recent achievement, and that which marks his entrance into Oregon, was the completion in 1908 of a great water level railway on the north bank of the Columbia. This road connects at Pasco, Washington, with the main line of the Northern Pacific of which the Hill interests secured control, and from Vaucouver, Washington, it is carried over the Columbia and the Willa-

mette to Portland, Oregon. With its connections the line is known as the "S., P. & S.," or Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad. Among the connections of this system in Oregon are the line to Astoria and Seaside, the *Oregon Electric* extending now from Portland south to Eugene, and the Oregon Trunk Railroad built along the Des Chutes river to Bend. In Washington, Idaho and Montana the feeders of the Hill system are much more numerous. These states also enjoy the benefits of the Milwaukee system, which was built across the Rockies in 1908 and has its western terminus at Tacoma, Washington.

On the whole, railway building, and in consequence almost every line of economic development, for some years was more rapid north of the Columbia than in Oregon, whose lines, gathered together under the control of the late E. H. Harriman, were commonly spoken of as the Harriman, or the Southern Pacific, interests as opposed to the Northern Pacific or the Hill interests. In recent years, however, the Southern Pacific has shown much activity in the transportation development of Oregon. It constructed the Des Chutes Railway in competition with the Hill interests, it completed the west side division in the Willamette Valley from Corvallis to Eugene, making thus far a second line from Portland south, took over the privately built Corvallis and Eastern, and built extensions south into the Eastern Oregon Plateau from Biggs, Arlington, and Willows to Shaniko, Condon and Heppner respectively. It has also built a short extension from Pendleton to

Pilot Rock, a longer feeder from Baker to Prairie City and a still longer one southwestward from Ontario into the vast undeveloped regions of Malheur and Harney Counties. But probably the Southern Pacific's most significant achievement is the recently (1916) completed line from Eugene to Coos Bay, which gives the interior access to a southern seaport and brings into relations with the rest of Oregon an isolated but exceedingly fruitful section of the state. Besides, it prophesies the ultimate completion of a coast line to California.

The eastern portion of Oregon is not yet adequately supplied with railway lines for the primary purposes of agricultural development, though plans are on foot whereby the various existing partial systems may be connected together into a system capable of serving this vast area, so long given over to the grazing of cattle and sheep under open range conditions.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PROGRESS OF AGRICULTURE

The states of the Pacific Northwest are usually described as primarily agricultural. The first settlements were made by farmer folk from the Mississippi Valley states, and farming has always been a leading industry throughout the region. In 1910 the three states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho had a combined population of 2,140,349. Of this total, 1,157,861 are classed in the census report as rural, which means that they lived either in the open country or in towns and villages having not to exceed 2,500 people. The number of farms in the three states was 132,501. If we allow five persons to the farm, which is probably a low minimum, the actual farm population would aggregate 662,505, or approximately thirty-one per cent of the whole. The total wealth of the three states was reckoned at $5,771,020,243, and the value of all farm property was $1,471,104,378, somewhat over twenty-five per cent.

At the date of the first census which took account of Oregon, the census of 1850, the number of farms was given as 1,164, and the average value of a farm with buildings and all personal property attached to the

farm was $4,217. The total value of all farm property was $4,908,588.

The story of the expansion of agriculture in the Pacific Northwest during the sixty years from 1850 to 1910 is not a simple account of the way the original number of farms was multiplied again and again, until the present total was reached. On the contrary, it is a complex, a picturesque, and at certain points a dramatic story of the colonization and development of an imperial area, diversified in its physical characteristics, in climate, and in natural productions.

Beginning of agriculture. The earliest cultivators of the soil, after the Hudson's Bay Company, were the retired French Canadian servants of the company who squatted on the rich second bench land along the Willamette some fifty miles from the mouth of the river. A district centring upon St. Paul, the site of the old Catholic Mission, is still known as French Prairie from the early French settlers.[1]

The Methodist Mission, and the colony which grew up about it, occupied land further to the south, but contiguous to French Prairie.

The companies of immigrants who came in annually, beginning in 1842, took up rapidly all the choicest lands to be found in the lower or northern parts of the Willamette Valley and pushed steadily southward until by the time of the California gold rush, 1848, their remoter settlements were nearly one hundred fifty miles

[1] The earliest French farmer was Etienne Lucier, who is said to have begun raising wheat on French Prairie in 1829.

from Vancouver, which still continued to be their market reached by boat on the Willamette.

The California gold rush, as we have seen, lured some of the Oregon pioneers to the valleys of the Umpqua and Rogue rivers where they settled as farmers and cattle raisers, to supply the California trade, and soon the gold seekers crossed from the south the Siskiyou Mountains into Oregon, which resulted in uniting the two communities though at some points the connecting band of settlement was still extremely slight.

The California market essential. The California gold rush seems the almost providential means of saving the Oregon colony (and the California colony, too) from stagnation and perhaps ultimate failure. In the entire history of the westward migration of the American people there is no example of an agricultural settlement which really flourished before adequate market facilities were created for it; and until California filled up, magically, with gold seekers the market of the Oregon farmers was entirely too limited and too uncertain.

Even after the gold rush had set in the market for wheat, flour, meats, fruits and vegetables, all of which could be supplied by Oregon and Washington farmers, was far from being unlimited, especially since California agriculture gradually supplied most of the local demand for food stuffs. The opening of the mines throughout the Inland Empire brought a new and much needed stimulus. But, once more, local agricul-

ture in the vicinity of the various mining centres soon came to be the chief reliance for miners' supplies. Later the development of Alaska as a new El Dorado brought much benefit to Northwestern agriculture; the Hawaiian Islands' trade increased, and a partial market for food stuffs was opened in the Asiatic countries.

Yet, all in all, the Pacific Northwest has suffered in its agricultural development from the stupendous fact that nature had made the region tributary to the Pacific rather than to the Atlantic. The markets of the world for the products of our farms and ranches are in Europe, and access to the European markets was seriously hampered by transcontinental freight charges on the one hand and on the other by the length and difficulty of ocean trade routes. Not until the opening of the Panama Canal can this region be said to have entered fully into the common benefits of the world market for American farm products. Now the handicap is removed and the whole Pacific slope shares the European markets with the Mississippi Valley and the Atlantic sea-board.

Economic reasons for slow growth. The absence of adequate market facilities during the greater part of our history is one of the main reasons for the comparatively slow growth of population in these states. While the progress shown by the population totals, given above, is certainly considerable, still the growth in other groups of western states has been very much more rapid than in ours. For example, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, were settled up

largely before the era of railways and in part before the steamboat came into use. Yet these three states multiplied their population in fifty-years (1790–1840) from 45,000 to 2,680,000. West of the Mississippi are the four neighbour states, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska and Kansas. Their rich prairie lands were as yet almost unbroken when the wagon trains bound for Oregon began wearing deep trails westward across their surface. Yet, between the years 1840 and 1880 these four states gained a combined population of 3,793,000.

To sum the matter up, population in the states north of the Ohio advanced during the first half century of settlement about three times as fast as in the Pacific Northwest, while in the states west of the Mississippi the rate was five times as rapid.

Inadequate markets, however, were only one cause of the delay in peopling this favoured region. The other main cause was the existence of vast stretches of rich unappropriated land east of the Rockies, which would have to be taken up for the most part before a general movement of homeseeking farmers into the Northwest could be realized. For the "rush" of settlement is always into the next *available contiguous* area. Other conditions being equal, emigrants cling as closely to the old home as they can. This is a principle which western promoters who were ignorant of the history of settlement in the United States sometimes forgot, to their sorrow.

It would seem, therefore, that in recent years, with

the Panama Canal inviting to the markets of the world, with improved and improving railway facilities, and with no further competition with free lands nearer the centre of population the chief handicaps to agricultural development have been removed and a period of extraordinary progress should be setting in.

Recent progress more rapid. That this is true is apparently demonstrated by the census figures showing the increase in number of farms and in farm values between the years 1900 and 1910.[1] In 1900 Oregon had 35,837 farms averaging 281 acres in extent. These farms, with the buildings, machinery and domestic animals pertaining to them, are assigned an average value of $4,821 or a total farm wealth for the state of $172,761,287. Ten years later there are 45,502 farms, an increase of nearly 10,000; the average acreage is 256.8, a reduction of 24.2 acres. But the value of the average farm, fully equipped as before, has risen from $4,821 to $11,600, and the value of all farm property in the state has grown to the remarkable total of $528,243,782.

Even more striking is the case of Washington, where the number of farms increased from 33,202 in 1900 to 56,192 in 1910, and their total value increased from $144,040,547 to $637,543,411. This represents an increase in the value of the average farm in Washington from $4,338 to $11,346 in ten years.

Idaho had 17,471 farms in 1900, and by the year

[1] An analysis of those figures, and of the apparent prosperity of Agriculture, will be given at a later point in this chapter.

1910 she had 30,803. All farm property in 1900 was valued at $67,271,202 and in 1910 at $305,327,185. The average farm in that state was valued in 1900 at $3,850, in 1910 at $9,911.

Here we have, therefore, for the whole region an increase in ten years of 46,187 farms, and an increase of $1,087,031,342 in agricultural wealth. The new farms created during the decade would represent an addition to the farm population, on the basis of five to the farm, of about 231,000. The total increase of population in the three states during the decade was 1,046,938,[1] from which it appears that about twenty-two per cent of the new population have found homes on farms.

Comparing the last census period with the decade 1880 to 1890, the first great era of railway construction during which population growth was exceptionally rapid, we obtain some interesting results. During that era the number of farms in Oregon increased from 16,217 to 25,530, or a gain of 9,323; in Washington, from 6,529 to 18,056, or 11,527; and in Idaho, from 1,885 to 6,603 or 4,718. This makes a combined gain of 25,568 farms, providing homes for 127,840 persons. Thus it appears that our growth during the last census period has exceeded that of 1880 to 1890 by approximately 20,600 farms representing a population of 103,000. When we consider that the Panama Canal was not opened to traffic until nearly five years after the decade closed and that its benefits were therefore

[1] Washington 623,887, Oregon 259,229, Idaho 163,822.

prospective rather than actual, the impression deepens that the agricultural prosperity of the Northwest has only well begun and that the next fifteen or twenty years are almost sure to witness great if not revolutionary changes.

The Willamette Valley first to develop. Prior to 1880, progress had been rapid nowhere except, for a few years, in the Willamette Valley. The chief stimuli there in the decade 1850 to 1860 were the California market for farm produce, and the Donation Land Law. This law permitted settlers who were married to take up 640 acres of land, one-half of which was to belong to the husband, the other half to the wife. The law was passed by Congress in September, 1850, and it expired by limitation in 1855. Under its terms all of the most valuable farm lands in the Willamette Valley were taken up, and since the law applied equally to Washington Territory numerous claims were filed there, too. The result is seen, partly, in the fact that Oregon[1] farm holdings increased during the decade from 1,164 to 5,806, or 4,642 farms, while in the next decade the increase was less than 1800 farms.[2]

Between 1870 and 1880 the growth is more marked. This period was influenced by the gold rush to the Inland Empire which began in the 60's and was signalized by the opening of new farming areas in Eastern Oregon. Mention has already been made of the Grande

[1] Including Washington.

[2] In Oregon alone. No data for Washington Territory until 1870.

Ronde Valley, partly settled between the years 1862 and 1870, as was also the Powder River Valley and the Umatilla. All of these sections increased steadily in the next decade.

The Inland Empire; ranching. Moreover, the charms and the profits of stock-ranching on a large scale were causing a considerable emigration from the Willamette Valley to Central Oregon, especially Crook and Wasco Counties, while men from Southern Oregon crossed over to Klamath County, and to Harney County. In this vast plateau region, with limitless range all about, the stockman located his claim in some sheltered valley or cove, where the union of good soil and a supply of water made possible the growing of grain, hay and vegetables. He could thus support his home, while the herds or flocks multiplied until, in many cases, they numbered scores of thousands of animals and made their owners wealthy.

Some notion of the extent of the range business can be gathered from the statistics of the increase in live stock values which represent the range interest together with the ordinary farm interest. In Oregon the number of farms increased between 1870 and 1880 from 7,587 to 16,217 or 8,630, a gain of 113.7 per cent. But the value of livestock on farms and ranges increased in the same period from $6,828,675 to $17,110,392 or 150.6 per cent. In Washington the number of farms gained 108.8 per cent, while the value of livestock increased by 184 per cent. In Idaho the number

of farms shows an increase of 355.3 per cent and the value of livestock 866.2 per cent.

The twenty years from 1870 to 1890, or thereabouts, was the heyday of open range stock-raising in the Pacific Northwest. During that time the stockman was free to increase his herds to any practicable extent, secure in the knowledge that his pasturage was unstinted and that few would interfere with his use of the public lands surrounding his homestead. Afterwards restrictions began to be felt, until by gradual stages the old type of ranching was forced to give place to the system of enclosed ranges.[1]

Changes in the ranching business; the great cattle companies. While the advance in live-stock wealth has continued down to 1910 and a large proportion of the increase is still due to the ranges of the Inland Empire, the conditions of stockraising have changed enormously. The picturesque "cowboy" of a quarter century ago is rarely met with today on the sage plains, and the historic "round-up" is now enacted as a pageant before throngs of hilarious spectators.

When the stockman became convinced of the necessity of retiring to his own enclosed pasture, he usually tried to provide himself amply with lands for his future operations. Many failed in the endeavour and went out of the stock business. A few, by means not al-

[1] Except in certain districts, and in connection with the grazing of the forest reserves.

ways honourable, secured titles to enormous tracts which are now generally in the hands of corporations. In one Oregon county which contains patented lands amounting to 1,127,180 acres, seven cattle companies hold a combined acreage of 512,955 or almost one-half of the whole. One of these companies is believed to own 229,000 acres in that county, and nearly as much more in each of two other Oregon counties. In various Pacific and Rocky Mountain states the company owns an empire aggregating 22,000 sections or 1,408,000 acres.

Much of the territory now held by the cattle companies was originally filched from the National Government by the well-known device of the "dummy" entryman; some of it was once embraced in a wagon road grant unwisely made by Congress, which was purchased from the grantees; some of it was land falsely, or at least doubtfully, described as swamp land and as such sold at the rate of one dollar per acre; and some was state school land the engrossing of which was permitted by the laxness of the state in enforcing the laws intended to restrict the sale to actual settlers.[1] Some of it, probably, was secured by the use of land scrip. And there are many cases, it is charged, in which homesteaders were terrorised by hired thugs into selling their rights to others, for the benefit of the cattle companies.

The companies an obstacle to progress in grain-

[1] For the facts concerning the titles to the big ranches in Harney County, Oregon, the writer is indebted to Mr. H. K. Shirk,

growing. In whatever manner the lands may have been secured, the existence of these big ranches is one of the present day obstacles to the progress of grain farming, the advance of which was the chief cause of the change from open ranging to the new method of stock raising.

The profits in wheat growing on the volcanic soils of Washington, Idaho and Oregon are so generous, under a régime of cheap lands, that every extension of railway facilities has promptly brought fresh areas under the plough. Lands which were once considered of no value except for their bunch grass pasturage are found to produce with proper "dry land" methods of cultivation, bountiful crops of hard wheat. To be sure, a considerable area in Washington and a much larger area in Oregon lies at an elevation too great for maturing the common varieties of cereals. Yet, even these lands must not lightly be condemned to range uses forever. The agricultural colleges and stations are sedulously engaged in plant-breeding experiments which are likely to solve what is now a very real problem. If they succeed, as in time they doubtless will, we may look for a vast increase in the cultivated area, east of the Cascades, within a reasonable term of years. For not only dry farming methods, but new irrigation projects, of which a number are already in operation, will steadily encroach upon the area of the stock ranges until through the rise of land values, or through

of Burns, Oregon, who personally examined land office and court records bearing upon the subject.

the adoption by the states of a forward-looking policy of getting all tillable lands into the hands of home-making cultivators, the grazing industry will finally be completely subordinated to farming proper. Practically, it will be confined to the very rough or very stony ground, and to the forest reserves.

In the year 1910 the state of Washington reported 40,920,390 bushels of wheat grown on 13,865 farms. Oregon reported 12,456,751 bushels from 13,202 farms; Idaho 10,237,609 bushels from 12,676 farms. The acreage of wheat in Washington had been multiplied since 1879 by 26; in Oregon by less than 21; and in Idaho by 18. In 1915 Oregon's estimated production was 20,025,000 bushels; Washington's 50,94,000 bushels, and Idaho's 18,730,000 bushels. The wheat farms are growing larger every year.

Wheat growing in the Willamette Valley. In Oregon the expansion of the wheat area east of the Cascades was offset in part by a gradual decrease in the acreage and the yield of wheat grown in the Willamette Valley. The early settlers raised wheat with extraordinary success. For many years the valley had a national repute as a wheat growing region. But bad methods of cultivation, an almost total failure to supply elements of fertility removed from the soil by successive crops and the destructive custom of permitting the water soaked ground to be trampled by livestock in the winter finally rendered a naturally rich soil unresponsive. The wheat yield dwindled steadily until the margin of profit on its cultivation disappeared.



Modern Flouring Mill, Spokane, Washington, successor of one of the pioneer mills

Agricultural readjustment; striving for a permanent agriculture. For a number of years, the agriculture of the Willamette Valley, and other sections of western Oregon and western Washington, has been striving to readjust itself. The quest has been for something which should prove a satisfactory substitute for the old staple, wheat. But no other cereal could be grown successfully where wheat had failed. Besides, the soil required rejuvenation and for this fertilization and improved methods of culture were imperatively demanded. The remedy, therefore, was not a new crop, but a new agriculture.

It cannot be said that the problem has been finally solved, but it has come to be generally recognized, which is the condition of its solution. Year by year the nation-wide movement for a permanent agriculture wins new adherents and new missionaries in this section.

Dairying. Perhaps the conditions of a permanent agriculture are as well fulfilled in dairying as in any other system of farming. Experience has shown that under such a system, if well conducted, the fertility of the soil is built up year by year, while the sure if modest profits of the business render the farmer and his family independent. The climate, soil and productions of western Oregon and Washington are especially favourable to the success of the industry. Dairying therefore is being promoted with a vigour born of confidence.

One of its best features, our farmers are told, is the

way it improves the farmer himself. Since profits are small or non-existent to the shiftless or untaught and relatively large for the careful, scientific dairyman, the business serves as a school of agricultural efficiency.

The benefits of dairying appeal also to the cultivator of irrigated acres in all parts of the Inland Empire. The success with which alfalfa hay, oats, and corn can be produced for stock feed, and the increased value of these productions when turned into butter, cheese or milk is there the great incentive.

Census figures of six or seven years ago are not illustrative of the dairy industry as it is in the Northwest today, progress since 1910 having been especially rapid. Perhaps a better indication of growth in the entire region, would be the statistics of the Dairy and Food Commissioner of Oregon, for that state, covering approximately the period 1900 to 1916. He finds that in Oregon the number of creameries has increased from 50 to 105, and their butter product from 1,680,000 pounds to 16,288,000 pounds. Oregon had 20 cheese factories in 1901, producing 119,500 pounds of cheese, and 74 in 1916, producing 8,952,000 pounds. In 1905 there were three condensaries, manufacturing condensed milk, but there is no record of the product until 1914, when there were seven factories producing 19,580,000 pounds. In 1916 they were producing 27,116,000 pounds. The entire dairy output of Oregon for the year 1916 is estimated at $20,000,000. The figure for Washington would be considerably higher.

General farming. General farming, which com-

bines the dairy with pigs, sheep, poultry, fruit, and market crop production is probably the most common form of the reconstructive agriculture in the old sections of the Northwest. The use of legumes,— vetch, the clovers, peas, beans and alfalfa,— is aiding materially toward restoring the productive powers of the cropped-out soils. Corn, once considered out of the question because of the cool summers, is being raised successfully, benefitting the soil by the more adequate culture it receives and contributing notably to the success of dairying and pig-feeding. Silos are already dotting the landscape in many sections, and almost invariably they are being filled with corn.

A substantial gain has been made in Northwestern agriculture since the opening of the era of general farming as opposed to grain farming. Two main obstacles, however, have impeded the progress of reform. These are, first, that the relatively high price of farm lands delays the process of subdividing the large farms of pioneer times into holdings suited to a more intensive system of farming; second, that the extraordinary variety of soils and situations makes the cultivation of every quarter section of land in Western Oregon or Washington in some sort a distinctive problem to be solved only through special study and experimentation.

Tradition and custom are here less safe as guides to the farmer than they are in the Middle Western states. And since most men rely on tradition and custom to a large extent, the percentage of failures is relatively

high. On the other hand, while they make progress slower, it is probable that in the end the conditions mentioned will develop here a race of trained, thoughtful, independent men comparable to the old farming class of the New England states.

Farm land values; the census figures. The question of farm land values cannot be disposed of in so optimistic a manner. It constitutes a very serious problem affecting the entire social structure in these states, as well as the progress of agriculture. It was pointed out above that the total combined value of all farm property in Oregon, Washington and Idaho in 1910 was $1,471,104,378, or about 25 per cent of the total of all forms of wealth. In 1900 the value of all farm property stood, for the three states, at $384,083,036. The advance, accordingly, amounted to $1,087,031,342, or about 300 per cent. But of this gain, $982,345,184 is assigned to land and buildings, or farm real estate property. According to the census report, farm lands alone, as distinct from buildings, increased in value during the decade 217.7 per cent in Oregon, 278.3 in Washington, and 276.1 in Idaho. This rise occurred in face of the fact that the percentage of farm land which was improved actually decreased in both Oregon and Washington, owing to the vastness of the new tracts taken up. Thus it becomes clear that the noteworthy advance in farm land values, during the last census period, represents a gain principally in the social value of land — the unearned increment — which, properly speaking is not an economic

gain, so far as the farmer is concerned. Of course it is a fruitful source of gain to the speculative land buyer and especially to the dealer in farm lands.

Causes of social value. The primary cause of the rise in the social value of lands here, as elsewhere in the United States, is the disappearance of the free lands. Hitherto these regulated the value of the farm lands, permitting only such advance as was justified usually by the cost of improvements plus the original expense of securing title. Thus, in the case of Oregon, the value of farm lands and buildings averaged $6.58 per acre in 1850, when 30.7 per cent of farm land was improved; $13.50 in 1880 with 52.2 per cent improved; $16.75 in 1890 with 50.9 per cent improved; and $13.14 in 900 with 3.3 per cent improved. But, in 1910, with only 36.6 per cent of the lands improved, the value per acre had gone up to $38.98.[1]

This movement of values, since 1850, corresponds closely to the movement of farm values in the United States as a whole. Until 1900 the influence of free lands effectually prevented the general rise in farm land values. The disappearance of free lands during the two decades 1890 to 1910 removed the natural regulator of values with the result that in ten years time they were more than doubled. In 1900 the average for land and buildings was $19.3 per acre, while in 1910 it was $39.5.

Speculation in farm lands. A secondary cause of social values in the Northwest has been an

[1] In Washington it was $48.84, and Idaho $46.38.

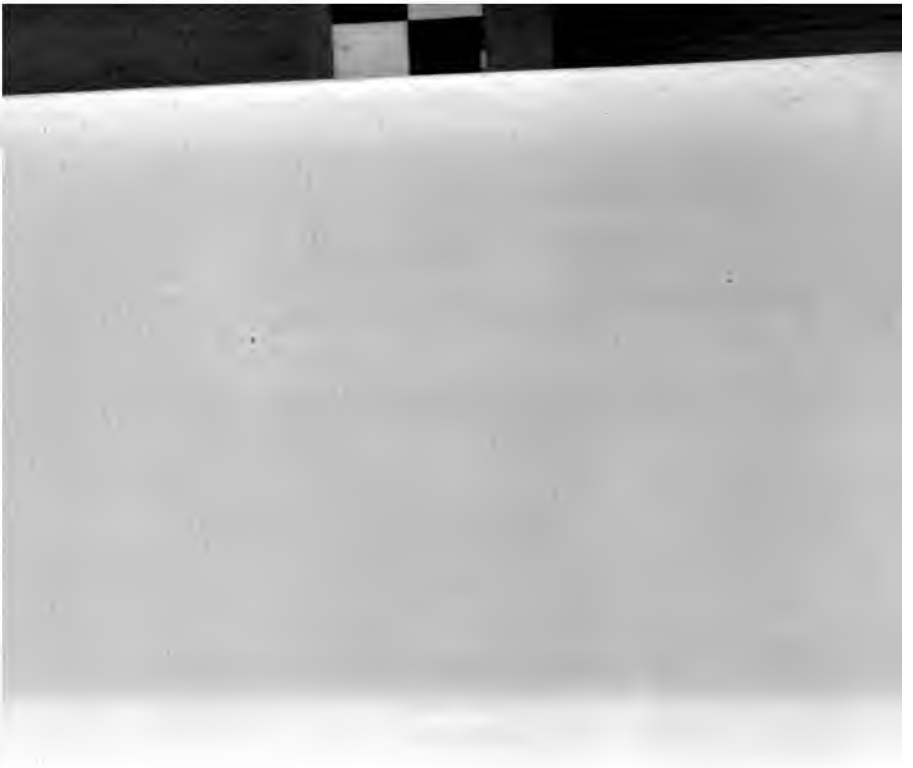
excess of speculation in farm lands. Two closely related facts, orcharding and irrigation, have served as the dynamite for breaking up all the old conceptions of farm land values. Several favoured localities, like Hood River Valley, Yakima Valley, the Payette region and Rogue River, demonstrated the possibility of turning ordinary farm lands, worth from $10 to $25 per acre, into fruit orchards worth from $250 to $1,500 per acre. Since there seemed no convincing reason why other areas should be deemed incapable of growing fruit "just as good" as that of the places named (and others equally successful), and since the market for certain kinds of fruit appeared to be almost unlimited, men strove madly to multiply orchard areas.

There was a rage for planting and especially for planning new orchards in all sorts of soils and every conceivable situation. It became a common practice for realty companies to buy up a few cheap farms, located as chance might dictate, and to throw them into a single tract. To this they would then apply some poetic or at least promising name and begin to sell it off in tracts of from five to forty acres. By means of lavish expenditure for advertising, all of which would be repaid with usury by the unwary purchasers, conscienceless promoters often reaped a rich harvest. Their victims in too many instances have reaped sorrow only.

Cases of this kind poisoned the minds of the farmers, who readily seized the chance of selling their farms



One of the fruit-growing regions of the Northwes
River Valley



for orchard purposes at high values, and when one farm was thus sold all others in the neighbourhood instantly came into the market, always at fictitious values. Legitimate farming suffered as district after district, county after county, engaged in the race for wealth easily gotten through the speculative disposal of farm lands, to easterners or others in the grip of the fruit-growing mania.

Irrigation, wherever it came, worked even a greater revolution in the value of lands affected, than did fruit growing. Desert lands are low-priced. Irrigated lands are high-priced. Schemes of irrigation by private companies, under state auspices, and under national auspices were actively promoted in some areas, anticipated in others, and hoped for wherever water and sage plain were found in relations which might render irrigation possible. The result has been speculation in so-called "irrigable" lands tending to inflate values unduly.

Increase in number of small farms. From all causes, some legitimate and some otherwise, the number of small farms, ranging from less than twenty acres to one hundred acres, was increased in these three states during the last census period from about 28,000 to 59,000; and it is significant that the largest relative increase was in the number of very small farms,— those under twenty acres. In farms of moderate size, from one hundred to one hundred seventy-five acres, and over one hundred seventy-five but under five hundred, the increase was slight.

Also of very large farms. The very large farms, especially those averaging more than 1,000 acres, were growing more numerous, both actually and relatively to the whole number of farms. This process, which apparently still continues, is due to the fact that wheat raising by capitalistic methods is extremely profitable, and the larger the area cultivated, under a single management the larger the profits.

Effect of land prices on immigration. A general inflation of land values influences the rate of immigration of desirable citizens from other states into this region and defers still further the full development of Northwestern resources. This fact is coming to be recognized as well as the other fundamental facts (a) that the high price of farm lands is responsible in large measure for the drift to the towns which, considering the comparative newness of the region, is seriously disquieting to all thoughtful men, and (b) that it contributes to the anxieties and the unrest of the industrial classes who see in it the prospect of their permanent exclusion from the ranks of landowners. Hence, it is not strange that remedies should be sought through extreme socialistic measures for land holding reform like the Single Tax. Such a measure was defeated by the Oregon electorate at the general election in November, 1916, the vote standing 43,390 "Yes" and 154,908 "No."

Suggested remedies. Probably no similar measure can pass in any of these states until the landless industrial class shall be distinctly in the majority.

Meanwhile, earnest men are seeking remedies which may, if possible, conserve the lands for the use of actual homemakers, in unit areas suited to the needs of a family under the varying economies of grazing, wheat growing, general farming, irrigation farming, orcharding, etc. It should be possible, in view of the experience of other countries, to induce monopolistic concerns to sell their surplus land, at reasonable and yet profitable rates, to those who actually need them for the support of homes. If a plan of procedure could be found which would release for agricultural purposes such parts of the great cattle ranches as could be profitably cultivated either with irrigation or by dry farming methods, and which would at least prevent the bonanza wheat farms from growing bigger than a given maximum acreage, a beginning toward reform would be made. In order to be thoroughgoing it must fix the acreage of the normal holding for each type of farm. The normal holding would have to be made general by the exercise of the law making and taxing powers of the state and in extreme cases through the use of the state's reserved power of eminent domain. Of course, the "normal farm" would require to be re-established from time to time as population became denser and cultivation more intensive.

In order to limit speculation in farm lands, it has been suggested that a state land "exchange" be created for the purpose of listing, at a central office, all farm lands which are for sale or exchange, and for classifying such lands according to definite and logical

principles, with reference to their real character. By this means it is believed the inflation due to speculation, to over-wrought description, and to false or misleading classification, would be eliminated. The state office could exert a wholesome restraint in the interest of fairness to both buyer and seller.

Agricultural education. As respects the problem of agriculture, education is performing two main functions. On the one hand it aims to assist the adult generation of farmers to adapt themselves to the new conditions imposed by the new agriculture. On the other, it strives to train the next generation in such a manner that they may be able to meet similar problems even if these should appear in much more acute forms. The agricultural colleges of the Northwest are keenly alive to their responsibilities, and they employ a vast system of extension services in the hope of aiding the practising farmer. They are likewise co-operating with the public school systems in developing the means of training the children.

A hopeful sign is the fact that not only all educators, from state superintendents of instruction to district school teachers, but all classes of men in these communities and all types of organizations, are interested in promoting agricultural education.

CHAPTER XIX

INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

Aside from agriculture, which employs more of the labour of the Northwest than any other single interest, the people are engaged in a considerable variety of diverse industries. At one time, as we have seen, mining was a prominent industry both in Southern Oregon and in many portions of the Inland Empire. The palmy days of the placer fields are over, at least for the present, and, relatively, activity in mining has greatly decreased. Yet there are a number of centres where quartz mining is carried on to a considerable extent while attempts to earn "good wages" by "panning" gold bearing dirt along the mountain streams are fairly numerous, though the business cannot be dignified as a regular or important industry. The metals produced are mainly gold and silver, copper, zinc and lead. But the value of the gold produced in the entire Northwest is a mere pittance as compared with Alaska, or with the three great gold producing states, California, Colorado and Nevada.

The coal supply. The three Northwestern states have an original coal supply estimated at 65,573,100,000 tons. Of this, 64,917,100,000 is assigned to Wash-

ington, 1,000,000,000 to Oregon, and only 700,000,000 to Idaho. Only about 100,000,000 of this supply had been exhausted in 1915. Coal mining, however, is engaging more attention year by year. The requirements of transportation, manufacturing, and other more general fuel demands have created a strong interest in the development of the older known coal fields like those in the Coos Bay region and on Puget Sound, while the testing out of new prospects goes on with promptness and enthusiasm. Considerable deposits of valuable coal have been opened in the Cascade region of Eastern Washington and this coal field is rendered accessible by the Northern Pacific Railway which traverses the area. The Puget Sound coal is in part easily accessible to ocean going vessels. The coal of Coos Bay, since the completion last year of the Coos Bay division of the Southern Pacific Railway, finds a way out both by rail and by water.

The coal fields of Alaska are prospectively a resource to the entire Northwest as furnishing an abundant supply for the developing manufactures as well as for the transportation agencies of this country. Their extent, while known to be considerable, is not yet accurately determined.

Manufacturing; lumber. From a manufacturing point of view the Pacific Northwest is still in the infancy of its development. Such activity as there has been, which in the total is large, is represented mainly by the extractive industries — making a primary use of the vast natural resources of the country. In this

respect the extraction of values from the native forests holds the first place in importance. These states possess extraordinary opportunities for the manufacturing of lumber, on account of the vast areas of superb primeval forest growth included within their boundaries. And lumbering has become an industry of large proportions. Probably the most complete lumber manufacturing plants to be found in the world are located in Washington and in Oregon, some of them having been substituted, by a kind of evolution, for small, crude mills of the pioneer days of the industry, others being erected as new ventures at suitable points in proximity to timber supplies large enough to justify an expectation of reasonable permanency. The most abundant timber is the Douglas fir, sometimes known in the eastern markets as Oregon pine; but there are also forests of spruce, of yellow pine, and a much smaller supply of the valuable sugar pine; cedar, and other varieties are found scattered somewhat widely among the more common growths. For some purposes, as for furniture making, other growths, including the maple and even the alder, are beginning to assume importance.

The rapid development of the lumbering industry of the Northwest has come since 1880, when it began to appear that the bountiful forests of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota were after all not inexhaustible. Since 1900 the production of the Lake states has declined sharply, while in Oregon and Washington the increase has been enormous, amounting by 1913 to

about 6,700,000 M, of which Washington was producing 4,592,000M, and Oregon 2,098,000M.

It was about 1900 that the larger lumber manufacturers and capitalists of the Middle West began spying out new forest land in which to operate when supplies of timber on hand should fail. Some were attracted to the Southern States, Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Georgia, also North Carolina and Texas. All of those states in consequence show stupendous increases in their lumber outputs, which totalled in 1913 15,300,000M, as against less than 4,000,000M, for the Lake group. Others began to acquire holdings in the Pacific states, notably Oregon and Washington, where vast tracts were brought under the control of a few wealthy operators.

Timber land; how secured. The land laws of the United States were drawn with reference to the individual cultivator or homesteader, and were ill adapted to the requirements of lumbering, which calls for such large investments in machinery as are justified only on the assurance that raw materials of manufacture — in this case timber — will be available for a reasonable number of years. Being unable to purchase such supplies of timber from the government, which sold only to individuals and in lots not to exceed 160 acres, operators felt themselves under the necessity of buying the lands entered by private holders. Since, moreover, every operator, on contemplating a new business, based his calculations upon the exploitation of a given body of timber which must be secured

cheaply in order to insure profits and minimize risks, the temptation was sometimes overpowering to hire "dummy" entrymen to take up the lands from the government and turn them over to the operator on receiving the government's patent therefor. There was a time when the contracting of one's "timber right" was considered a perfectly legitimate process of "bargaining and selling." It involved no disgrace to either party. But during the Roosevelt administration a number of timber land frauds were prosecuted to conviction and the public finally awoke to the immorality of such proceedings, which involved on the one hand perjury and on the other subornation of perjury, with purpose to defraud the government of its lands. Operators are now content to buy such tracts as they want from legitimate owners, paying on the basis of stumpage. They are sometimes able to secure abundant supplies of timber by contracting for stumpage growing in the Forest Reserves. In such cases they buy no land, of course, and they harvest the timber when ripe, under the direction of government foresters.

Competition with the South. The land fraud prosecutions may have had some effect in delaying the progress of the lumber business in the Northwest, by tending to impede the usual process of acquiring timber supplies to feed the proposed manufacturing plants. Yet, doubtless, the main reasons why manufacturing proceeded more slowly here than in the South were that timber was not readily accessible

and markets for the lumber still less so. A long rail haul would be required to place the product in reach of the users of lumber east of the Rocky Mountains, and a very long water haul would be required to lay it down in Europe or on the Atlantic seaboard. In comparison, the Southern forests were near the great markets both of America and of Europe. This explains why Oregon and Washington in 1913 produced 6,690,000M, as against the 15,300,000M, produced in the eight southern states named.

Nevertheless, lumbering had definitely taken its place as the leading manufacturing industry in these states. Already, there are centres where the manufacture of lumber is producing important towns and cities, as it did in Michigan, as witness Saginaw and Grand Rapids, or in Wisconsin where Oshkosh and Lacrosse illustrate the same tendency. And, moreover, so large is the lumber industry that when its prosperity wanes the entire industrial and commercial life of these states is seriously affected. When lumber prospers the case is reversed.

The market for lumber. The prosperity of the lumber business depends on an unfailing market, on low freight rates on the overland railway lines, and on the excellence and cheapness of water transportation. This explains the eager, determined interest which Northwestern people have taken in the tariff on lumber, in the decisions of the interstate commerce commission respecting freight rates, and in

the question of free tolls for vessels passing through the Isthmian Canal.

Similarly, these states have a direct interest in the termination of the European war, for it seems certain that when peace comes the demand for lumber to rebuild portions of devastated Europe will tax the production capacity of the Northwest for a number of years. Arrangements are now being made, in anticipation of the new demand, for increasing the producing capacity of existing plants, while many new ones are being erected and still others planned.

From what has already been achieved and from the reasonable expectation of the future, it may be assumed that lumbering in this section will pioneer the way for a general manufacturing development, as it has done in other sections of the United States. It is giving rise, gradually, to the manufacture of furniture and other finished products into which lumber enters, and it will probably result in building up a considerable group of inland cities having a permanent economic support in such manufacturing industries. At the sea-ports an extraordinary interest in the building of wooden ships, stimulated by the war, promises to reproduce on this coast some of the features of the noted centres of that industry on the north Atlantic coast.

Manufacture of paper. One of the significant secondary products derived from the forests is paper, which at some points, notably at the falls of the Willamette (Oregon City), is manufactured in large

quantities in plants representing heavy investments, employing a considerable number of mechanics and other labourers, and using the most modern equipment. The material used is certain varieties of soft woods, especially the so-called "balm-of-Gilead" which grows along the water courses and in some cases can be floated to the mills at a slight cost for transportation. The same material is used also in the manufacture of "excelsior" used in packing, for making cheap mattresses, etc. Excelsior mills, being cheap and simple in their construction and equipment, are distributed rather widely, as are also shingle mills for similar reasons.

Packing fish, especially salmon. The preparation and packing of fish, especially salmon, constitutes in Washington and Oregon a large and important though not a progressively expanding industry. The business began on the lower Columbia about the year 1866, prior to which time much salmon was taken and salted but not canned. There was a rapid increase during the first ten years. In 1866, the first year for which we have statistics, the pack amounted to only 4,000 cases.[1] In 1876, it was 450,000 cases. By that time the interest in salmon packing had extended to Puget Sound, to Gray's Harbour in Washington, and to the coastal streams in Oregon, but the

[1] All figures are reduced to a common basis of 48 one-pound cans to the case. The information relating to the salmon pack from 1866 to 1916 was furnished by the School of Commerce, University of Oregon.

quantities produced elsewhere than on the Columbia were light. Puget Sound, however, passed the 100,000 mark in 1895 and six years later passed the one million mark, the pack of that region in 1901 being 1,380,590 cases. This high record has been broken three times since 1901: in 1909 with 1,632,949 cases, 1911 with 1,557,029 cases, and 1913 with the huge output of 2,583,463 cases. The pack of the Columbia has varied in extent from 629,400 cases in 1883 to 253,334 cases in 1908. In forty-one seasons the Columbia pack has exceeded 400,000 cases twenty-one times, and it has never in that period dropped below 250,000 cases. The coastal streams of Oregon show their highest production in 1907, with 197,332 cases. Gray's Harbour in Washington has produced as high as 72,727 cases and a later developed area in Washington, Willapa Harbour, has produced 40,000 cases. The total pack of the Northwest in 1866, as stated, was 4,000 cases, and in 1876, 450,000 cases. Ten years later it was 515,000, in 1896 it was 810,900, in 1906 it was 1,057,230 cases, and in 1916 the total was 1,410,126 cases. Thus it appears that the industry is somewhat fluctuating, due to the seasonal variations in the salmon run. The packing factories (canneries) are located conveniently near the supplies of fish, on the rivers and inlets, which reduces the labour requirement to a low minimum in relation to the value of the product and the capital invested. Legislation looking to the conservation of the fisheries, which provides for the maintenance of hatcheries for restocking the

streams, the regulation of the fishing seasons, modes of fishing, etc., may perhaps result in stabilizing the industry on approximately its present basis.

Packing fruits and vegetables. The business of packing fruits and vegetables is steadily growing in importance throughout the Northwest, the region itself gaining distinction for both the quality and the output in these lines. A portion of the fruit, especially the prune crop and a portion of the peach crop, is dried or "evaporated" for marketing. But cherries, pears, small fruits, and a great variety of vegetables are mostly canned. The number of packing plants, or canneries, is large and their distribution such as to serve appreciable areas of country. Some of the most successful of these are conducted on the cooperative plan, the growers themselves owning the stock and managing the business through the agency of boards of directors and superintendents. Since the fruit cannery exists for the purpose of saving such portions of the various crops as cannot be marketed in a fresh state, the association which owns the cannery usually is primarily a fruit marketing organization. Nevertheless, the business necessarily increases relatively to the rapid increase which is taking place in the production of those kinds of fruit, like cherries and Loganberries, for which the demand in the fresh state bears only a small proportion to the total supply.

Mention has already been made of the manufacture of milk products, butter, cheese, and condensed milk,

in which an almost indefinite expansion can be expected in the future.

Beet sugar manufactories. Several plants for the manufacture of beet sugar exist in this region and others are promised. If general conditions continue to favour the industry the beet sugar factory will undoubtedly take its place as one of the resources of the Northwestern farmers generally for securing profits from the cultivation of the soil. The growing of beets for this purpose contributes to the building of a permanent agriculture since the beet tops can be used for silage and the pulp which is left after extracting the sugar is accounted a valuable food, both for dairy cows and other stock. Idaho, Eastern Washington, Eastern Oregon and Southern Oregon appear to possess special advantages in beet sugar production because for reasons connected with soil and climate the sugar content of beets grown in those sections is especially high.

Manufacturing nitrogen from the air. One of the most interesting investigations into manufacturing possibilities has been with reference to plants for the extraction of nitrogen from the air by electrical processes. Owing to the unlimited water powers and the consequent cheapness with which electric energy can be produced, it is believed that the Northwest can enter upon that line of manufacture with reasonable hopes of success. The United States government, for reasons of military preparedness, appears to have some interest in such projects, but their permanent success

would depend on the demand for artificial fertilizers occasioned by the change to a more intensive agriculture, and the very rapid development of horticulture and of truck farming in the region itself and in other accessible regions.

The prospective general use of electric power in industry. The abundance of water powers in these states has also suggested a very general and widespread use of electric energy for the doing of all kinds of work like driving machinery in shops, and even in homes, as well as in factories. Being both cheap and easy to distribute and to apply under favourable conditions, the small business can employ it almost as economically as the large one. Some of the cities of the Northwest have municipally owned power plants, others privately owned. The economy involved in a large scale development of powers, instead of small ones, stimulates the quest for a market for electric energy beyond that implied in a demand for electric lighting. All are therefore trying to sell energy for every purpose in the towns served by power plants. Beginnings have already been made toward equipping homes with electric heating appliances, which can be done where power is cheap at rates which are economical as compared with heating by means of wood or coal. There are chimneyless farmhouses in certain sections, all cooking as well as heating being done with electricity. On some farms, too, electric power is employed to drive household and barn machinery, to pump water, etc. If those thinkers are right who ad-

vocate a revival of individual and family, or small group, industrial production as a cure for some of the evils of factory production, then the Pacific Northwest should be among the first regions of the United States to make the experiment.

Northwestern water powers. The actually existing water powers of the Northwest have only begun to be used. These three states with northern California contain, it is estimated, at a minimum 12,979,700, at a maximum 24,701,000 horse power, or nearly one-third of the entire water power of the United States. The Des Chutes of Oregon alone has a capacity of 1,920,000 horse power, and numbers of streams in nearly all portions of the area are susceptible of large development. Up to the present time the sparseness of the population in most sections militates against power development, since the cost of distributing systems prevents the cheap marketing of energy. All of the centres of population are supplied from near-by sources, leaving the vast majority of our water powers untouched. The growth of the population will bring new powers into use constantly, and the rapid growth of towns, together with the development of closely built orcharding communities, makes fresh markets requiring in a number of cases the tapping of new power resources.

External commerce; beginning. The history of the external commerce of the Northwest began, as we have seen, with the efforts of the Hudson's Bay Company's agents to add to the company's profits by

such trade. They were primarily fur traders, but the cheapest way to purchase the furs taken by the Russians along the coasts of Alaska and on the northern isles was to exchange for them wheat, flour, and other foodstuffs for which the Russians were willing to pay high prices. These supplies were produced at Fort Vancouver, and afterwards in the Willamette valley only a few miles away. They could be bought by the company in exchange for their merchandize, brought from London. By charging a good profit on the shoes, clothing, sugar, coffee, and other articles sold to the Oregon settlers in exchange for wheat, and then, at Sitka, receiving a good profit once more in the shape of fur, for the wheat and flour delivered there, the company was sure to prosper in that branch of its activity. They needed a sawmill for supplying their own lumber requirements, but once in operation this plant could produce economically an occasional cargo of lumber for shipment, which usually went to the Hawaiian Islands. Thus our external commerce began with wheat and lumber as the Northwest's contribution and wheat and lumber have remained to the present time the leading and almost the sole important items in our foreign trade.

When the territory of Oregon was created by act of Congress in August, 1848, a United States custom house, the first on the western coast, was established at Astoria. For some years the ships entering and clearing at that port were almost without exception engaged in the California trade. But, as California's demand

for Oregon wheat and Oregon lumber waned, because of local developments in farming and lumbering, other markets were gradually found. In the years 1865–1867, for example, most of the ships entering at Astoria were from Victoria, Vancouver Island, and from Honolulu. There was one from Mexico which brought a cargo of salt in bulk, over three hundred tons. The bark *Cambridge,* from Honolulu, in the same year (1865) brought brown sugar, molasses, limes, bananas, watermelons, and oranges. At the same time a schooner from Victoria unloaded furniture, pig iron, coal, coal tar, cod-fish, cast iron beds, several chests of tea, brandy, dress silks, wool shirts, mixed shirts, worsted table spreads, checked cotton cloth, and tweed coats — in short, a cargo made up of British manufactures mainly and evidently derived from Britain by the Hudson's Bay Company, now domiciled at Victoria, for trade with their one-time neighbours on the Columbia. In 1868 a ship came in from Liverpool, also one from Hongkong. The former brought earthen ware, stone ware, one thousand sacks of rice, matting, tea, oil, ginger, etc. The latter delivered anvils, vices, chains, saws, band iron, bar iron, horse shoe nails, curry combs, and worsted cloth.

These examples give some idea of the diversity of the inward trade. Going out the ships carried away, aside from lumber and wheat, quantities of gold dust produced from the Inland Empire mines. By the year 1870 the trade had sensibly increased. In October of that year the United States government established the

Willamette customs district, with a custom house at Portland.

When Commander Charles Wilkes reported on his exploring expedition of the years 1838 to 1842, which carried him through nearly the entire circuit of the Pacific Ocean, he predicted a great foreign trade for the American communities destined to arise in Oregon and California. Wilkes was especially impressed with the harbours of Puget Sound and of San Francisco — "two of the finest ports in the world." Trade would spring up, he believed, between the west coast of America and "the whole of Polynesia, as well as the countries of South America on the one side and China, New Holland (Australia), and New Zealand on the other. Among the latter, before many years, may be included Japan." He adds, "Such various climates will furnish the materials for a beneficial interchange of products and an intercourse that must in time become immense."

Prophecies of Charles Wilkes. Wilkes' prediction, insofar as it relates to the Pacific Northwest, is not yet fulfilled in all respects. Yet there is much in the course of our foreign trade which justifies it. In particular, the directions which that trade now takes on leaving the Northwestern ports appear in the main to have been clearly outlined by Wilkes seventy years ago. If we take the list of ports given in the Portland custom house records of ships clearing from that port from January, 1909, to December, 1916, we find: (1) That the cargoes in all cases

are either lumber, or wheat, flour, grain; in two or three cases only are they "barley." (2) The lumber cargoes were destined for Hongkong, New Zealand, Australia, Manila and Calcutta; to Shanghai, Hankow, and Tsingtau in China; to Tokio, Kobi, and Yokahama in Japan; to Callao, Darien, Colon, Buenos Ayres in Central and South America; also to Delagoa Bay, to Antafagasta, to Kale, to Port Pirie, to Dalny; also to Queenstown for orders, to Newcastle, to Cape Town and to Hamburg. (3) Wheat and grain cargoes went to Hongkong, to New Zealand, to Queenstown for orders, to Dublin, to St. Vincent for orders, to Ipswich, London, and Avonmouth, to Teneriffe, Marseilles, Callao, Las Palmas, Antwerp and Rotterdam.

A large proportion of the commerce originating in the Northwestern states is carried eastward by rail and amalgamated with the commerce of the Atlantic ports. The extent of such shipments cannot readily be ascertained. Moreover, much coastwise trade exists which adds commerce of Northwestern origin to the foreign business credited to San Francisco. These facts affect the total of our shipments to foreign ports very materially and they should be noted when statistics are under consideration. Also, the fact should be noted that a considerable portion of the Oregon trade passes through Puget Sound ports, thus affecting the relative trade statistics of Oregon and Washington. Idaho, of course, sends all of her products out by way of the ports of Oregon and Washington, except the portion borne eastward by rail.

Statistics of commerce. Government statistics for the years 1914 and 1915 show the following totals: From Oregon ports were exported, in 1914, products nearly all domestic, amounting to $13,806,260 and from Washington $6v,374,909. The next year Oregon's exports were $20,405,601 and Washington's were $67,887,784. Oregon's imports in 1914 were valued at $3,890,000 and in 1915 at $4,716,390, while Washington's imports were $55,391,565 and $68,466,-567 in the respective years. By way of comparison it may be pointed out that in the year 1914 California exported goods valued at $65,000,000, which sum was increased the next year to $84,000,000. She imported in 1914 to the extent of $72,000,000 and in 1915 to the extent of $71,000,000.

The Alaska trade. The trade of Alaska is a matter of very great interest to the entire Pacific Northwest, and it engenders keen rivalry among the Northwestern ports. Thus far the Puget Sound ports, especially Seattle, have profited most from the Alaska trade. By reason of the protected channel from Puget Sound to the southern Alaska ports, it would seem that this trade can be prosecuted more economically from the northern ports than from Oregon, except as to those articles which are produced in the region geographically tributary to the Oregon ports or those carried coastward from the far interior by the routes reaching most easily one of the southern ports.

The beginnings of the Alaska trade are graphically described by Mr. Henry Villard in his " Memoirs." In



A view of the water front in Seattle, Washington



April, 1876, Villard sailed from San Francisco to Portland. "On reaching the mouth of the Columbia river," he says, "we saw a little screw steamer of 300 tons register dancing up and down on the agitated sea. It proved to be the *Gussie Telfair* . . . on her way from Alaska to Portland, but detained outside by the rough sea on the bar. She brought down from the recently acquired American possession three passengers, a score of tons of miscellaneous freight, and a letter bag with less than thirty letters. . . . The trifling load described was about equal to the average one for a trip one way and the business of the year aggregated only a few hundred passengers and not exceeding 700 tons of other than government freight. That represented practically the total of the Alaska trade of those days, and it grew very slowly." Villard was writing in the year 1899, and his reminiscent statement, given above, is for purposes of comparison with the Alaska trade of the later time, after the Klondike and other gold discoveries had awakened the vast Northland into a new life. He says: "During the past and present seasons (1898 and 1899) fifteen steamers ranging from two thousand seven hundred to a few hundred tons capacity, carried tens of thousands of passengers and freight aggregating not far from a hundred thousand tons to and from Alaska."

Without attempting to trace the progress of the Alaska trade in detail, it may be pointed out that the Collector of Customs for the Alaska District, reporting for the year ending December 31, 1916, gives the

Retain at

following totals: Merchandise received from the United States, $30,834,793; shipped to the United States $62,507,811. Alaska shipped to foreign countries, merchandise, $1,544,182, gold and silver, $2,936,018. Her total exports were $84,622,450 and total imports $35,314,993. From 1868 to the end of 1916 Alaska is shown to have had a total trade, in sea and fur products, of $323,042,290, in products of mines $345,752,111, making a grand total of $668,794,401.

An analysis of the trade for the years 1913, 1914, 1915, and 1916 shows that the largest item now is copper, which in 1916 accounted for $33½ millions of dollars, an advance of nearly thirty millions over the production of 1913. Gold and silver made in 1913 $13 millions of dollars, $14 2-3 millions of dollars in 1914, $16 millions of dollars in 1915 and $16 1-3 millions of dollars in 1916. The other large item is canned salmon, which in 1916 makes $21½ millions of dollars of exports.

It will be seen that Alaska produces vast quantities of the precious metals and of copper, as compared with the states of the Pacific Northwest. These and her canned salmon, furs, etc., give her people a large average purchasing ability which explains the highly desirable character of the Alaska trade. As yet, most of the general supplies required by them are imported much as they were in the days of the Russian fur trade. Nevertheless, this market cannot be regarded as permanent, for Alaska, too, is beginning to develop

her agricultural and other resources which in some sections are not inconsiderable. Moreover, Alaska has an enormous reserve in her timber, which one day will seek an outside market in competition with that from the Northwestern states, and the exports of lumber will purchase, partly in foreign markets, many of the articles now brought in from Seattle or from Portland.

Influence of the Isthmian Canal. It is too early to speak definitely about the changes in Northwestern commerce due to the Isthmian Canal. But it is clear that, while the canal will open the Pacific basin to the trade of Atlantic and Gulf ports, it will at the same time open the Atlantic basin to the ports along the Pacific, including those of the Northwestern states, and such an exchange should prove not unfavourable to this region. The general feeling here is that, for the first time in the history of the Pacific coast states, their commercial opportunities are equal to those of the Atlantic states; and it is expected that when the European war ends, and the distinctive products of the Northwest — especially lumber, fish, and fruits — come once more into normal request abroad, the commercial progress of these states is likely to be phenomenal.

CHAPTER XX

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGE

Observations of a traveller in the Northwest. Entering the Oregon country by the old "Oregon Trail" in the summer of 1900, the writer was impressed with the thought that pioneer conditions were both absent and present. Compared to the social barrenness, matching the physical barrenness, which was encountered by the emigrants of 1843, '44, and '45, one found every night even in the mountain stretches a sheltering ranch house by the side of the trail and usually good and abundant food. The line of the North Platte was marked by irrigated alfalfa meadows. On the Sweetwater also an occasional level, near a convenient water privilege, was ditched and cultivated, usually to produce winter feed for cattle, though here and there was a field of wheat grown by irrigation. Land was still cheap in those regions; in fact excellent irrigated bottom land on the Platte was selling as low as $20.00 per acre, not an excessive price for wheat land guaranteed to produce a large yield each year.

[1] The sources of information for the present chapter, which deals mainly with recent developments, are in large part the direct observations made by the author during a residence of seventeen years in the state of Oregon.

From Caspar, Wyoming, to Rock Springs, a distance of some two hundred miles along the upper Platte, the Sweetwater, and over the mountains by way of South Pass there were no towns along the trail save the most primitive supply stations which were separated by intervals of, say, fifty or sixty miles. The ranches in that region sometimes neighboured as close together as five or six miles, more often ten or twelve, sometimes eighteen or twenty, and once it was necessary to travel forty miles in an afternoon in order to find food and lodging.

The journey, afoot and awheel, was tedious on account of sandy roads and strong, persistent head winds. Sometimes the length and steepness of the grades rendered the toil of travel excessive. Yet, for travellers equipped with bicycles there were no other hardships, for one journeyed day after day through a country which was "settled," albeit with only a sparse population.

The ranch houses encountered were genuine homes, representing the best traditions of American frontier life. They contained the usual comforts of farm homes and sometimes showed evidences of taste. Some good furniture, musical instruments, books, papers and magazines were customary accessories.

The rancher was commonly a man of much more than the average intelligence. He was likewise spirited, resourceful, self-confident — sometimes self-assertive and arrogant. He made a sharp as well as broad distinction between his own class and the class

he described as "hayseed farmers." He felt himself to be a kind of free continental aristocrat — a latter-day baron whose "fief," a hundred square miles of billowy grass land, supported no serfs and owed no services. His capital was mainly in his cattle. The herds varied in size from a few score to many hundreds. The unit of value was the marketable "steer," usually a three year old animal, fattened on the range. It was estimated that the cost of producing such an animal, under range conditions, was between twelve and fifteen dollars. It would sell for fifty dollars.

Status of the "rancher" in commerce. Thus the owner of many cattle was a man of wealth. He could exert economic power which would be felt far beyond the boundaries of his unstinted "range."

The type met with along the historic trail in Nebraska and in Wyoming was the type of the rancher of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. In those states, as elsewhere, he often assumed the rôle of the "big business" man in other ways than as a large shipper of livestock or a "cattle king." Sometimes he invested money in banks, in railroad stocks, or in city property. He had his rating in the commercial reviews, and could hobnob with bankers, railroad presidents, and metropolitan merchants. He perhaps made no display of religion or philanthropy, yet he often helped to build churches, or to endow colleges.

In politics. The rancher had a liking for politics. He attended party caucuses and conventions, ran for the state legislature, and sometimes defeated a lawyer

or metropolitan "business man" in the race for a seat in Congress. In proportion to their numbers, the ranchers of the Northwest have constituted a highly impressive class. Emerging from isolation to participate in the larger life of their commonwealths, they sometimes succeeded through a natural or acquired wisdom and eloquence, sometimes by virtue of a capacious wallet.

Not infrequently the rancher was a picturesque character and this fact, when it did not make him seem absurd, imparted a dramatic quality which appeals to large sections of the public.

It must not be forgotten that in recent years ranch life has come to be idealized and in consequence it has attracted men and women of superior attainments and culture. The city and college bred rancher, with splendid social, business, and family connections in the east, is not altogether a rarity, though of course he is the exceptional citizen on the sage plains as elsewhere.

Changes in social life of the ranchers. Important changes are taking place in the social life of the ranching population. A transition similar to the change from the sprawling, unscientific pioneer farming to the tight, efficient modern farming has occurred in the business of cattle raising and sheep raising on the plains. Winter feeding and careful breeding conserve the livestock and render the animals much more valuable than formerly. The "home ranch" or farm becomes correspondingly more important than the "out range" which once was all important. Re-

ducing the size of ranches has brought neighbours nearer together. Often a fertile river valley is well settled with families each of which owns hardly more land in the valley than would make a farm of reasonable size, range land being occupied outside. Such a valley makes a pleasant rural community, with all of the social facilities of the usual farm neighbourhood and with something additional but indefinable due to the free, joyous, untired spirit of ranch life as contrasted with farm life. Moreover, the comparative opulence of the ranchers, the scale of their business operations, their frequent trips to large towns, their outside social and business connections, all contribute to lend interest to the life of these communities.

An ideal ranching community. A present day example of a delightful plan of ranching came to the writer's attention recently. A group of eight individuals and families selected a location in a pleasant valley some sixty miles from a railway. Here they took up dry land homesteads, which under a recent act of Congress may reach a maximum of 640 acres. The group have expended money in the construction of good automobile roads, have an irrigating system and artesian water supply. They are building modern houses, barns, sheds, etc. Co-operating in this manner they will create not merely a good ranching business, bringing liberal returns, but an ideal community from which the old isolation and crudeness have disappeared.

Fruit growing districts; social advantages. By

contrast to the openness of settlement on the sage plains, the Northwestern states present a number of areas devoted to fruit growing, where agricultural populations attain a closeness of social organization approximating the incorporated towns. Thus they are able to give themselves those fundamental advantages of living represented by the modern home, with its water and sewer services, its electric light and electric power and garden irrigation; schools equal to those of the towns; clubs, lodges, churches; convenient stores, shops, etc. If one were asked to point to a region where rural life in the United States is at its best, socially considered, he would probably designate one or another of these favoured settlements, of which it is commonly said that they enjoy all the advantages of the town combined with those of the country. They differ from the New England villages of early times and yet have the promise of an influence similar in many respects. In them co-operation is fostered, the community spirit dominates the individual, leaders are discovered and public opinion takes on an organic character to replace the anarchic, chaotic quality it so frequently presents under less hopeful circumstances.

Changes in farm life. Rural life in the ordinary farming sections like the Williamette Valley is passing through marked changes due to the breaking-up of the large farms of pioneer times, the improvement of roads, the construction of electric rail lines, the telephone and the automobile. The effort to improve social conditions is perhaps as determined here as else-

where in the United States; the problem to be solved is not especially different, the obstacles quite as unrelenting. Indeed, the fluctuations of population, the "moving out" of old settlers and "moving in" of new possibly adds a feature which is absent from the problem in some sections, but it is an element not devoid of certain advantages. Sometimes the only hope of improvement in a neighbourhood lies in the introduction of new blood, or the death or translation of some one who has hindered social development.

The usual plans are being followed in the main by social reformers dealing with country life. They include the attempt to organize farmers into granges or farmers' unions, to develop local clubs, to promote a better and more adequate type of rural education by substituting the systematized consolidated "rural life school" for the traditional one-room one-teacher country district school. There are attempts likewise to improve the recreational and religious conditions of the country neighbourhood.

All sorts of influences are at work. The farm people of good ideals are earnest and untiring. Merchants and bankers are interested, state agencies like university and agricultural college extension services and the educational departments, national bureaus of education and of agriculture — all are active here as in other sections of the United States. And progress is being made, although to the impatient reformer the forward movement seems slow and tedious.

Organization of rural communities from village

centres. One new line of strategy has recently been developed. It takes the small town or the village as its point of departure and regards this as the focal point of a community compounded of town and country. The towns of small size, that have no manufacturing or other self-supporting activities, are to-day dependent for their prosperity upon the business created by the country demand for supplies of all sorts and for local marketing facilities. Since the rural mail service, the improved economics of the farms, the mail order house and the automobile have freed the farmers from their old time dependence upon the local town, it becomes necessary for the towns as a measure of self-preservation to make overtures to the country people in the hope of establishing new and mutually beneficial relations between them and the towns. In the proposed interchange of benefits the towns can offer, if they will, a modernized mercantile service, which will at once exclude the mail order house from the community. It can offer in many cases the readiest and best solution of the problem of giving country boys and girls adequate educational opportunities, to which end it needs merely to adapt the work of the town school more fully to the needs of country pupils, and to secure the inclusion of the entire community area in the school district — at least for high school purposes. The town can also afford social, recreational, and religious opportunities to supplement the more strictly local or neighbourhood opportunities now enjoyed by rural dwellers. Many special favours could

be extended by the town to its rural constituency once the community limits have been determined, which is obviously the first step. A rational and generous zone system of truck and jitney fees, a physician's fee scale which should distribute the expense of medical attendance somewhat more equitably between town and country dwellers, a plan of delivering groceries, fresh meats, etc., to farm customers at moderate expense, and a freight transportation service placed at the farmers' call are some of the obvious means of serving the rural needs. A number of small towns have already responded to the suggestion, and have initiated plans for town and country co-operation which have the promise of excellent results for both.

The wheat growing communities; how can they have a social life? The least hopeful of the agricultural communities from the social aspect are those which depend upon large scale wheat growing. As was pointed out in Chapter XVIII above, the profits of wheat growing increase with the size of the farms devoted to it, up to a point not easily passed. The result has been the progressive elimination of the small farmer or homesteader, the joining of field to field, under the same management, until community life as such has in many places disappeared. In some sections school houses, churches, and other evidences of a former social prosperity are abandoned and decaying in the midst of continuous wheat fields. The owners of the great wheat farms often live in the larger towns, leaving hired men or "renters" on the farms. These

men and their families have no schools, churches, or clubs at convenient distances, and are compelled to pass their days in a dreary round of unrelieved toil.

It is a serious question what the future has in store for the wheat belt populations. If all the power used on these farms were machine power, then the cultivators as well as the owners could perhaps live in the towns, using the auto for rapid transit to and from the home and farm. But as yet much of the power used is supplied by horses or mules which require attention early and late and winter as well as summer. The breaking up of the large holdings is in some sections not to be expected for many years. In some cases the wheat lands will probably be degraded into pasture lands as their soils deteriorate. In others the natural remedy, a permanent agriculture of more intensive character, will apply.

The large towns. Life in the larger towns and cities of the Northwest is undergoing rapid development due primarily to a splendid period of growth which has brought, with increased wealth, a multitude of new social and economic problems. The solution of these has sometimes proved too difficult for the people acting under their democratic city charters. In such cases the population has been factionalized and social conditions are consequently bad.

Most frequently the causes of disruption have been the liquor question and corporation control of utilities. Within the past two years all three of the Northwestern states have adopted state prohibition laws, which

have resulted in eliminating from towns the old problem of regulating or prohibiting the sale of liquor. And the movement toward municipalizing water, light and power has now become so strong, even in towns of moderate size, that a democratic solution of the general problems seems to be assured.

There is as much difference in spirit between any two of our larger cities as there is between two of the Atlantic cities, say, New York and Philadelphia. In our new cities, moreover, it is sometimes easy to see how the local spirit was created. Usually it is ascribable either to a peculiar set of conditions or to a group of men. Some cities appear short-sighted in planning, irresolute, or incompetent in carrying out schemes of social, commercial or industrial development. Inquiry usually ascertains the cause to lie in a narrow individualism which has characterized its "leading citizen" class. Another is overbold, confident, generous to rashness, speculative, characteristics which once more reflect qualities inherent in its leadership. Sometimes the mixed character of the population militates against unity of action under even the wisest leadership. Although the populations of Northwestern cities are less complex than are those of Eastern and Middle Western cities, nevertheless one finds everywhere the deep social rift between the "masses" and the "classes" which constitutes the special problem of American democracy.

Geographical problems. The geography of each of the three states of this group has had an unfortunate effect on the sentiment of unity. Oregon and



Panoramic view of Portland, Oregon. Mount Hood in the distance

Washington are divided by the Cascade Mountains into western and eastern sections, while Idaho is divided by an east and west line. The eastern sections of Oregon and Washington differ from the western in soil, climate, productions, and largely in the conditions of life of their populations. Ranching, wheat raising, and mining are the three chief interests of the inland country; the coast country has most of the commercial cities, lumber and other manufactures, fisheries, and general farming which is becoming steadily more specialized. The inland population spreads thinly over a vast area with few towns, mostly small; in the west the towns have more people than the country. Portland has about one-third of the total population of Oregon. Seattle, Tacoma, and Everett on Puget Sound aggregate about as large a proportion of the people of Washington.

In earlier times, before the admission of Washington and Idaho territories into the Union, schemes for the division and rearrangement of these territories were perennial. At present there is new state activity only in Idaho, where during the recent legislative session north and south clashed over questions relating to the removal of the State University to Boise in the south from Moscow in the north with the result that a plan of division was proposed. What the outcome will be is problematical.

In Oregon and Washington the eastern and western sections are usually able to compose their differences amicably. The west is proud of the development

which is going on east of the Cascades, of the enormous crops of wheat which swell the commerce of the port cities, of the wealth represented by millions of cattle, sheep and horses, all of which serves to support state government and activities. The east, while a little contemptuous of the more conservative west, respects it nevertheless as both the more populous and more developed region. Particularly do the easterners show consideration for the cities which are the commercial entrepots of these states. More or less trading goes forward at legislative sessions. The east — like all newer sections — feels itself badly treated in the distribution of state institutions, most of which are located in the west, and various attempts have been made with only partial success to balance the respective interests of the sections. On the whole, serious misunderstandings have generally been evaded.

A great point in the mitigation of sectional strife has been the fact that lines of communication cut across these states from east to west. The main railways either cross the Cascade Mountains or follow the line of the Columbia to tide-water. Feeders extend inland from these main lines. The Eastern Oregon town of Bend, on the Des Chutes, almost directly east of the Willamette Valley town of Eugene, is now within a few hours of Portland and her people feel as closely bound to their sea-port as do the residents of Eugene. Thus the social and economic influence of commerce is overcoming momentous natural forces in producing a genuine commonwealth sentiment in these states.

Radicalism in the Northwest. The Oregon System. Much has been said and written about the abnormal and foolish radicalism of the Northwest, particularly Oregon. The basis of Oregon's reputation in that regard is found in her adoption of the so-called "Oregon System" of direct legislation — the Initiative and the Referendum — together with other devices like the recall and direct election of United States senators by a provision in the primary election law. The fact is that this legislation is almost wholly ascribable to influences running back twenty-five years to the Populist agitation, and to a leadership which the Populist movement evoked. It simply happened that, while in other states the passing of Populism left no definite institutional results, in Oregon owing mainly to the organizing efforts of one man, Mr. W. S. U'Ren, the direct legislation features of the propaganda were brought very cleverly before the people at a time when disgust with representative government was extreme and were adopted. The rest was easy, particularly since Mr. U'Ren's "People's Power League" maintained an effective organization for promoting his ideas.

In view of the adoption of initiative and referendum amendments in most of the Western states, since Oregon blazed the way, it can hardly be maintained that the radicalism of the Oregon people was peculiar. Oregonians, and in fact Northwesterners generally, are better described as progressive than as radical. The same men who gained an almost unique popularity as

leaders in securing this progressive legislation have gone down to defeat in their attempts to pass, by initiative, legislation like the single tax which the people regard as unjust. Mr. U'Ren himself, as candidate for governor in Oregon in 1914, was badly beaten. The people honour him as father of the Oregon system: they assign him very unusual gifts as a political mechanician; but being unconvinced of the soundness of his statesmanship they refuse to follow him in matters of general state policy. That fact argues strongly against the charge that the people are unduly radical or easily stampeded.

Equal suffrage. The Northwestern states have adopted equal suffrage amendments to their constitutions. This is the result of a campaign covering half a century in which the leading protagonist of "women's rights" was a remarkable woman of frontier type named Abigail Scott Duniway. Mrs. Duniway spent the best years of a long and intensely active life carrying the message of equality between the sexes into every nook and cranny of these states. She lived to see the fruition of her work.

Prohibition of the liquor traffic. As stated above, all of these states have laws prohibiting the manufacture and sale for beverage purposes of alcoholic liquors. State prohibition sentiment was a gradual development. For a number of years under local option laws numbers of towns and localities became habituated to the saloon-less or "dry" condition. They saw the arguments of the opposition disproved,

their predictions of economic ruin confounded by the fact of a new prosperity. For a long time the economic argument that it would "hurt the town" prevented the business class from throwing their influence heartily for reform. But when their fears were dispelled by the successful experience of towns here and there, a tremendous new force was enlisted and progress toward universal prohibition became easy and rapid. It is notable that while the earlier arguments for the abolition of the liquor traffic were almost wholly ethical or moral, the arguments used in the final successful campaigns were generally economic and social.

Independent voting. In the days of extreme party domination it used to be held by sociologists that a marked tendency among the people of a state to independence in voting was a sign of exceptional intelligence. By that test the people of the Northwest would at once take front rank. Their voting, for many years, has been characterized by nothing so much as a determination to be irregular. In Oregon, for example, where the Republicans have had a clear and large majority, nominally, since reconstruction days, the people in the past sixteen years have generally chosen a Democratic governor. They are now represented in the United States Senate by two Democrats,[1] while their house members are all Republican. In 1912 the presidential primary gave the Republican

[1] Since the above was written death has removed one of these, his place being filled by a Republican.

nomination to Roosevelt and the election resulted in the choice of Wilson electors. In 1916, Washington and Idaho both gave their electoral votes to Wilson, while Oregon by a small majority gave hers to Hughes.

The problems of direct legislation. One of the important problems of our new democracy is to ascertain the limits within which the direct expression of the popular will, in an election, is efficient as a political remedy. We have a new freedom and the question is how to use it most wisely. Oregon's experience shows that the initiative and referendum do not constitute a panacea for all political or social ills. For one thing, the number of measures presented to the people, on an enormously long ballot, is sometimes so great that no true expression of the people's will can be hoped for. Methods of securing a shorter ballot have been discussed but without much result.

Conference and conciliation needed. It is not commonly recognized that under the direct legislation system there is much room for the oppression of minorities. Voting, after all, may be merely the trench warfare of politics. Somewhere in the system provision should be made for conference and conciliation, so that measures, when they appear on the ballot, may represent, at best, the aspirations of the most thoughtful minds among all sections of the population, at worst a tolerable compromise of their conflicting opinions. For this class and that class, without mutual consultation, to load the ballot with measures



Type buildings in one of the northwestern cities

sharply inimical to one another's interests will in the long run work more havoc to our ideals of social unity than was wrought by the old time machine-controlled convention and legislature, which even at the worst took some account of the sentiments of all classes.

The remedy for the evil here pointed out lies in a new institution which is no more a part of the state constitution than was the political convention, namely, the conference. To an increasing extent, the people of these states are habituating themselves to the idea that all wisdom does not reside in a class dominated by a single interest. They begin to recognize that since legislation affects all interests, the proposing of legislation like the nomination of candidates for office is a matter on which all interests should be consulted.

In Oregon the state University has for a number of years held an annual "Commonwealth Conference" for the discussion of questions on which legislation would probably be formulated later. In these conferences all interests have been represented and the views of all have been frankly stated. The result has been a mitigation of animosities and the acceptance of the commonwealth spirit as opposed to a class or section spirit, which means a desire to do justice. Other conferences, likewise, have been held, some at other educational institutions, some at the state capitals, and some elsewhere. The people are getting the conference habit, which, to the writer's mind, is the best guarantee that the new democracy will succeed, and that it will have a tremendous influence in socializing our people.

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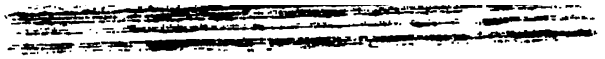
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